

TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART

1853-1933

L. F. SHEFFY

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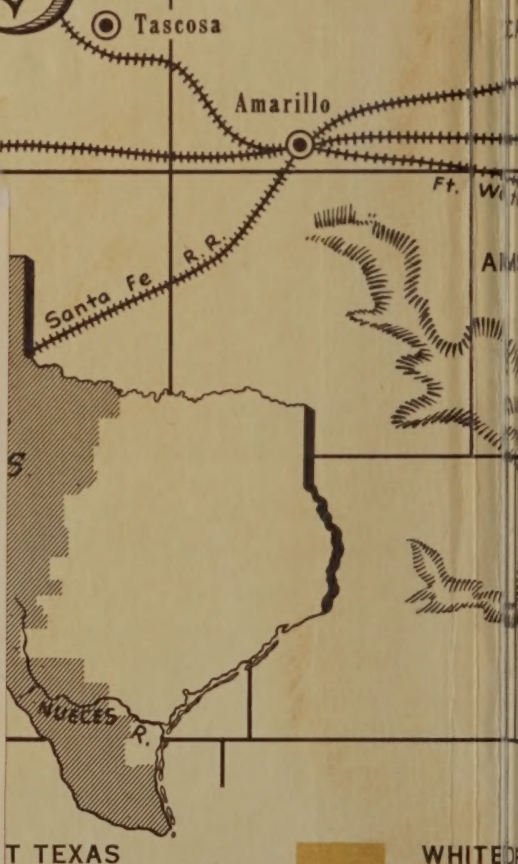
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Map Showing
The White Deer Lands
and the
J. A. Ranch in the Texas Panhandle
and the Section of Texas known as
West Texas



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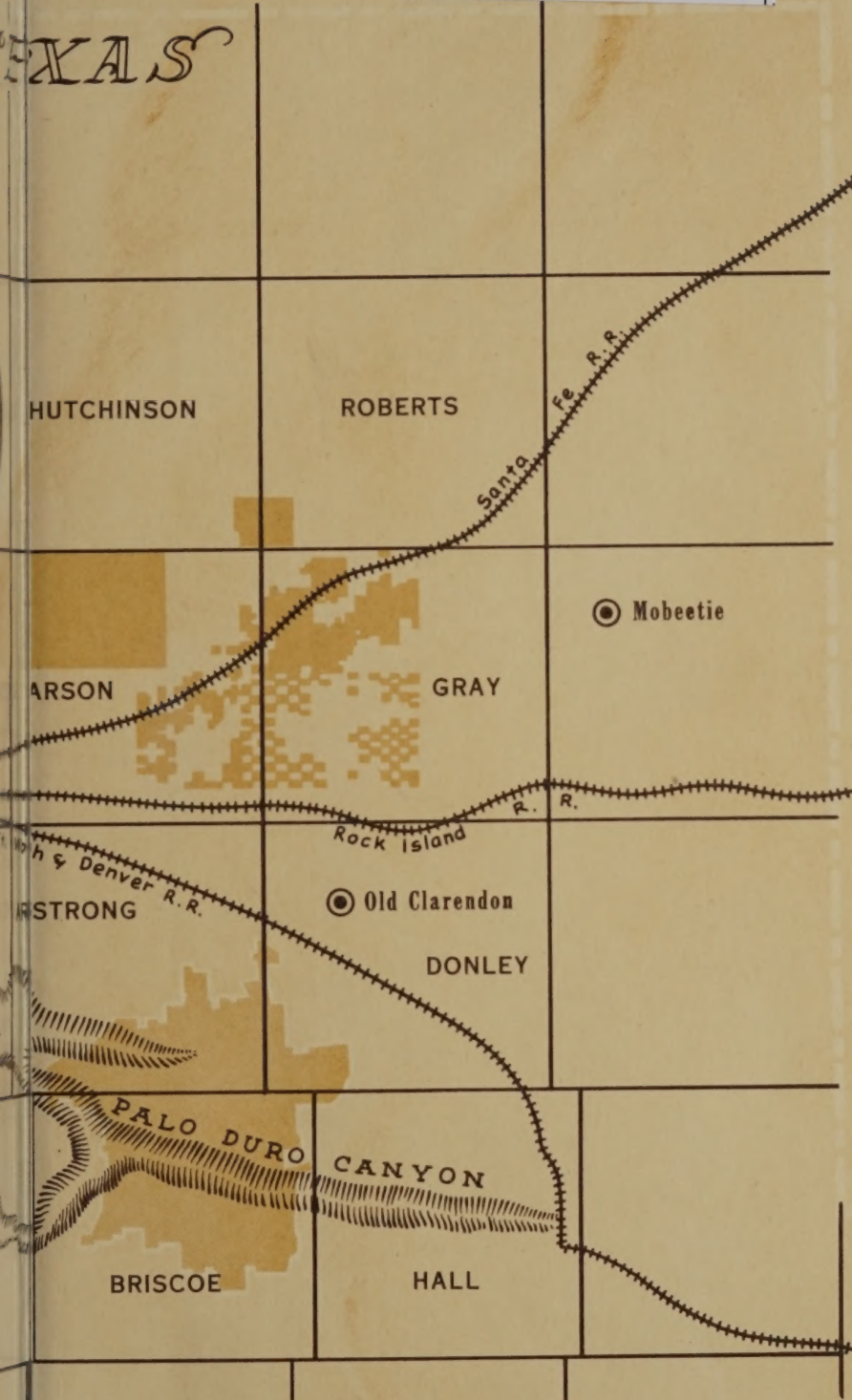




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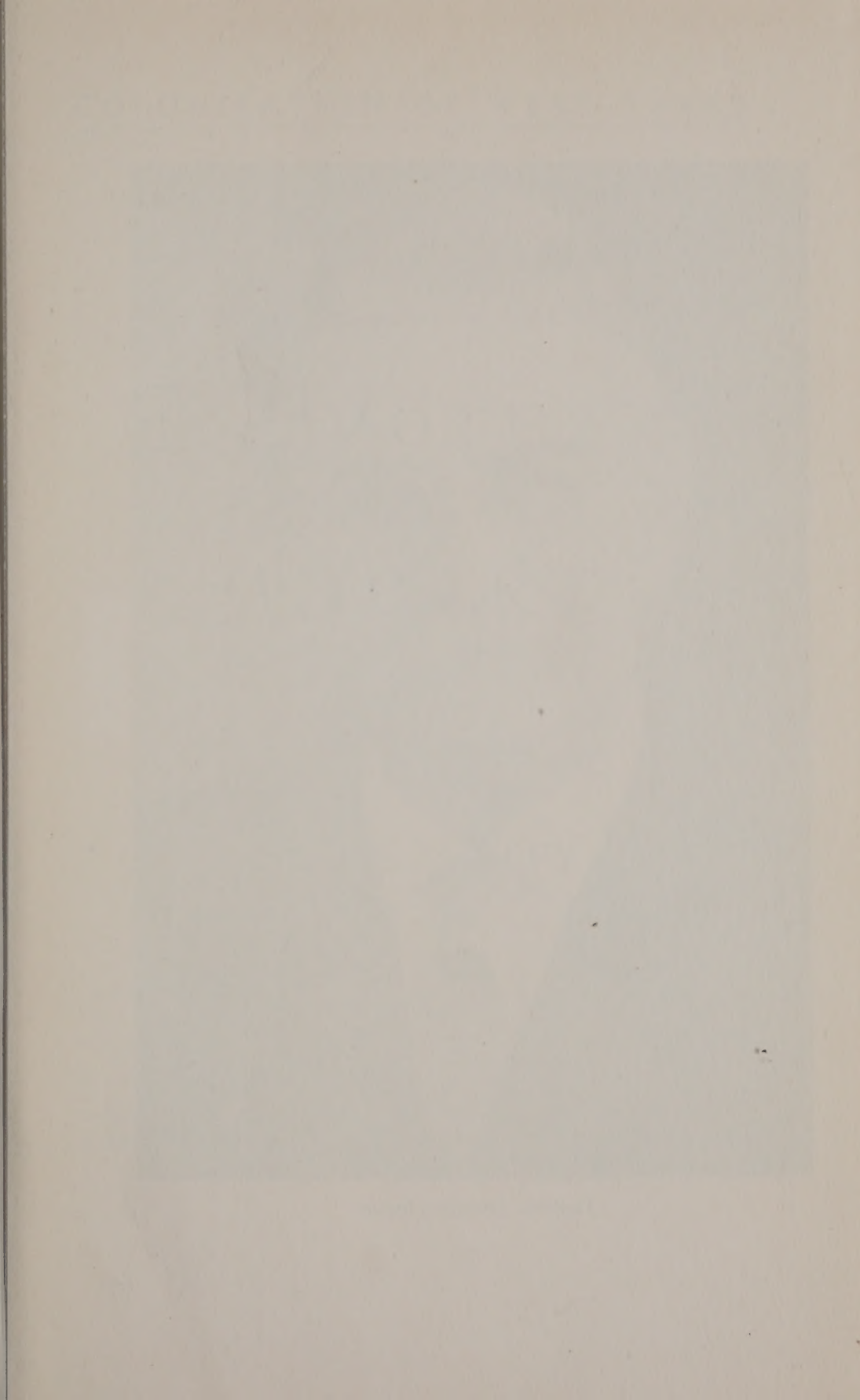
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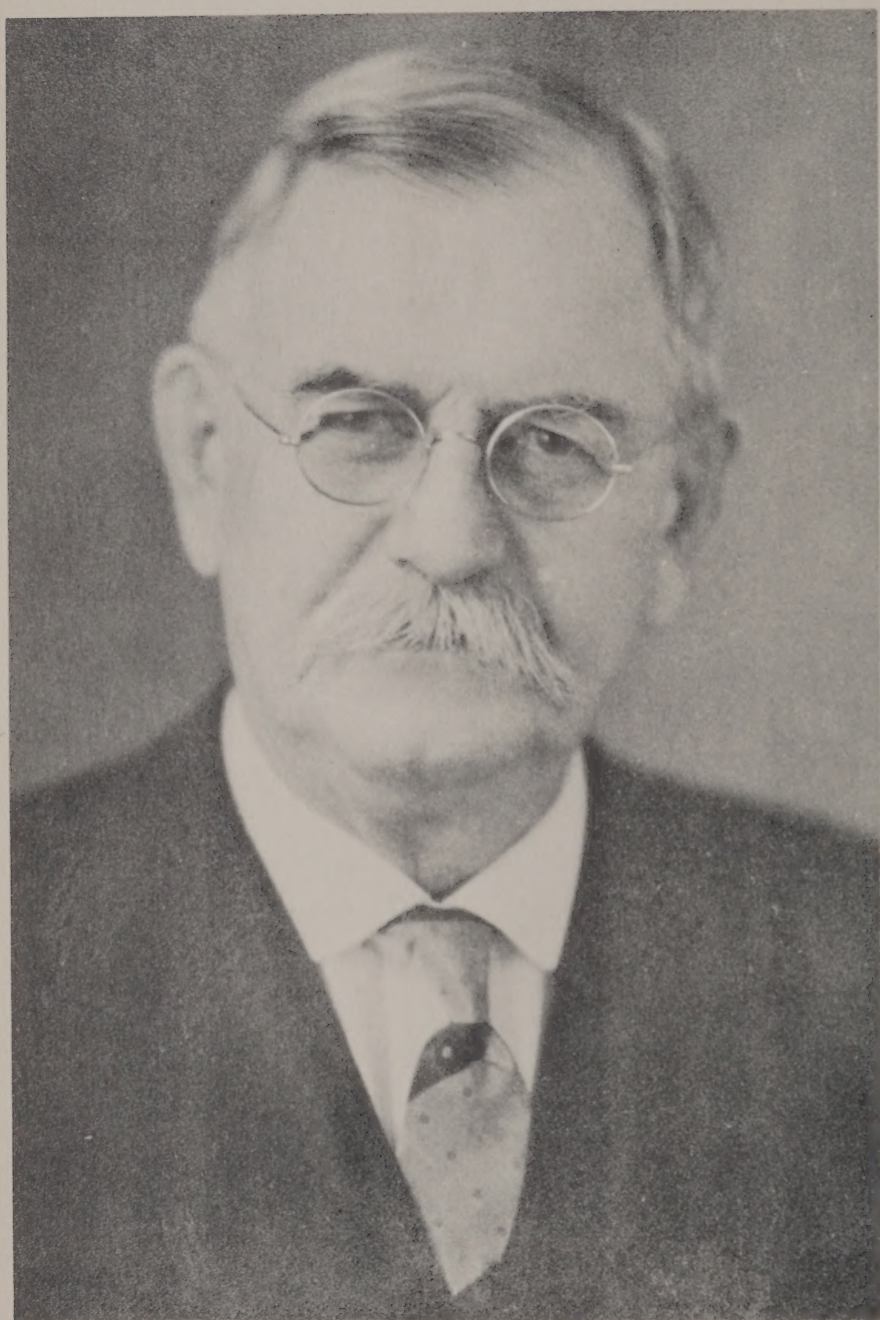
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TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART





TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART

COLONIZATION OF WEST TEXAS

The Life and Times of

TIMOTHY
D W I G H T
H O B A R T

1855-1935

By L. F. SHEFFY

THE PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CANYON TEXAS 1950

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*TO THE PIONEERS
OF THE
PANHANDLE PLAINS*

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PREFACE

FROM a physical standpoint West Texas is more closely connected with the Great Plains region than it is with East Texas. The topographic features and the climatic conditions of West Texas are similar to the topography and climate of the Southwest. These conditions kept West Texas isolated from the eastern portion of the state and retarded the advance of the western frontier for almost a half century until a new technique in pioneering could be developed. Meanwhile the Indians, buffalo, and Spanish longhorns continued to occupy the western public domain of the state.

East Texas was colonized during the first half of the nineteenth century as a part of the westward extension of slavery, but the plantation system reached its western limits by the middle of the century. A line drawn from the Red River through the present cities of Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, and Laredo marked the borderline between the Anglo-American settlements and the Indian country in Texas. It was almost a half century thereafter before the Anglo-American settlements could be pushed out into the western portion of the state.

Texas, therefore, has witnessed two periods of colonization. East Texas was colonized by Stephen F. Austin and other empresarios while it was yet a part of the Mexican nation. These early colonists struggled with constitutions, slaves, revolution, and war. West Texas was colonized in the latter part of the century largely through corporations and by means of free grass, Spanish longhorns, cowboys, cattlemen, and stock farmers. Both groups had to overcome the obstacles of an isolated wilderness country. One group found its greatest difficulties in trying to adjust itself to the laws, customs, and institutions that were foreign to their understanding and historical

background; the other group had to overcome the natural obstacles that a new and different region presented. The Civil War separates the two periods, and the interval intensifies and brings into bold relief the contrasting methods and processes used in the colonization of the two regions.

In the colonization of West Texas the life and work of Timothy Dwight Hobart is as typical of the historical processes in the settlement of West Texas as is that of Stephen F. Austin in the colonization of East Texas. The life of Timothy Dwight Hobart, manager of three large corporations, extends over a period of a half century. During this period from 1882 to 1935 institutional patterns were set up and permanently established in West Texas on the foundations that were begun by Colonel Charles Goodnight and other cattlemen who first settled on the plains of West Texas. The rapidity with which these institutions developed enabled Hobart to witness and experience an entire period of development that is distinctive in the history of West Texas. This is sufficient justification for this biography.

The history of the colonization of East Texas has been ably described by Dr. Eugene C. Barker in his biography, *THE LIFE OF STEPHEN F. AUSTIN*. The history of the colonization of West Texas has not yet been given sufficient emphasis at the hands of Texas historians. The biography of *THE LIFE AND TIMES OF TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART* is an attempt to give a more elaborate treatment of the movements and institutional developments in the colonization and settlement of West Texas.

L. F. SHEFFY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The biography of Timothy Dwight Hobart is the product of the work of many people. As the bibliography shows, numerous scholars had already prepared the way for me by removing much of the historical underbrush. This has made my task much easier. Scores of students who have sat in my classes in Texas History and in The History of the Great Plains have travelled thousands of miles, at their own expense, to secure and record the memoirs of hundreds of early pioneers of the plains. From these memoirs I have secured much information in the preparation of this work.

In writing this biography I have received financial aid from the Social Science Research Council of New York City, and also from the Rockefeller Foundation, through the Texas State Historical Association. I have also received financial aid from the Hobart family. Without this aid this work would have been impossible.

I am also indebted to my associates in the Department of History at the West Texas State College, Dr. Hattie M. Anderson and Dr. Ima C. Barlow. Dr. Barlow has read the entire manuscript and has made many helpful criticisms and suggestions. Dr. J. A. Hill, President Emeritus of the College, has given every encouragement possible. Messrs M. K. Brown and C. P. Buckler gave me free access to the White Deer Files at Pampa, Texas. Mr. Earl Vandale of Amarillo and Mr. N. D. Bartlett, Oil Editor of the Amarillo Daily News, checked the chapter on oil development in the Panhandle and gave much helpful criticism. Miss Harriett W. Smither gave liberally of her time in searching through the newspaper files in the State Archives at Austin, and Dr. H. Bailey Carroll of the University of Texas has given much encouragement and assistance. Much credit for this book is due my wife, Carolyn

Virginia Sheffy, whose sympathetic interest and continual words of cheer have lightened my task during the years of preparation of this volume.

Mr. Carl Hertzog of El Paso has designed and supervised the format of the book. Credit is due him for the artistic appearance of the work.

The author assumes full responsibility for the defects or shortcomings of the book.

L. F. SHEFFY

Canyon, Texas

BOYHOOD DAYS AND EARLY MANHOOD

TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART was born at Berlin, Washington County, Vermont on October 6, 1855. He came from a family of distinguished American pioneers. His American ancestry reaches back to the seventeenth century when the British first began to colonize in the New World. The Reverend Peter Hobart of Hingham, England, was among the first settlers who came to America during the period of the Great Migration. He arrived in New England in 1635 and helped to establish the town of Hingham, Massachusetts, and became the town's first minister. Reverend Hobart had four sons who also became "respectable ministers." This was the beginning of a long line of distinguished clergymen in the Hobart family, and they exerted a wide and beneficent influence in the New England section for almost two centuries.

By the end of the eighteenth century the Hobart family had pushed out into the unsettled territories of New Hampshire and Vermont. Captain James Hobart, who had served with distinction in the Revolutionary War, and Hannah (Cummings) Hobart were among the first settlers at Plymouth, New Hampshire. Their son, also James Hobart, was the first child born at Plymouth on August 2, 1766. He was the descendant in the fifth generation of the Reverend Peter Hobart who had migrated from Hingham, England, in 1635. Captain James Hobart was the great grandfather and his son James was the grandfather of Timothy Dwight Hobart the subject of this biography.

In the summer of 1785 Captain Hobart went from New Hampshire to the territory of Vermont where he purchased a tract of wilderness land located at the mouth of Jones Brook in the township of Berlin, Vermont. During the same summer James Hobart, who was then nineteen, and a brother, cleared

the land at Berlin and built a log house for their father. James Hobart was a studious and serious minded young fellow. He had a strong desire for a higher education. By the time his summer's work was finished he had decided to get a college education and, after that, to study for the ministry. He began his preparation for the ministry by studying "divinity" with the Reverend Dr. Asa Burton, a Congregational minister at Thetford, Vermont, in 1777.

Hobart possessed musical talent. In the autumn of 1785 he attended a music school at Newbury, Vermont, and became proficient in the subject. He later taught music as a means of defraying his expenses in securing an education. For two years Hobart pursued the study of theology under the direction of two eminent divines, the Reverends Jacob Wood and John Sawyer of Orford, New Hampshire. In 1791 he entered Dartmouth College where he received the A.B. degree in 1794.¹ Hobart united with the Congregational Church and was licensed to preach by the Grafton (New Hampshire) Association in April, 1795. He preached his first sermon at Chelsea in the same month. This was the beginning of a long and useful career in pioneering in the ministry, and the influence of this young clergyman was long felt in many parts of the New England section. He organized a number of churches in New Hampshire and Vermont. On November 7, 1798, he was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church at Berlin, Vermont, where his parents had settled permanently. He served as pastor of the Berlin Church until April, 1829.

Reverend James Hobart was the first settled minister of the Berlin Church. He built the first house of worship there and it was used until 1803. After his retirement from the church at Berlin, Hobart became an itinerant minister for various local churches. He had a "matchless energy and industry, a slight

¹ Reverend George T. Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College* (Charlotte E. Ford, Alumni Recorder, Dartmouth College, to L. F. Sheffy, July 16, 1947.)

but tireless physical system." He preached continually until his death on July 16, 1862. On one occasion, after he was ninety-four years of age, he accepted an invitation to preach in three different villages on the same day. He walked a total distance of seventeen miles to fill these appointments. In the same year he walked from Berlin to Washington, Vermont, where he preached on the following Sabbath. He died at the age of ninety-five years eleven months and fourteen days.²

In August, 1804, Reverend Hobart married Miss Betsy Perrin who was the daughter of one of the pioneer families in Berlin, and whose sister, Mary Perrin Dewey, was the mother of Admiral George Dewey. Reverend James Hobart and Betsy Perrin had twelve children—seven daughters and five sons. Three of the daughters married clergymen, and two of the sons planned to enter the ministry had their lives been spared.

It was in this religious environment and background that Timothy Dwight Hobart grew up as a child. Timothy Dwight's father was David Hobart, a native of Berlin, Vermont. He was a man of sturdy character and had a "remarkable memory." David Hobart was steeped in the Puritan philosophy. He was a strict disciplinarian who believed that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. He never failed, therefore, to administer severe punishment when he felt that the occasion demanded.

Dwight's mother was Caroline Reed of Gardiner, Maine. Before her marriage she taught for a number of years in the Gardiner schools. Caroline Reed's mother was a Prescott, and was related to the historian William Hickling Prescott. She was also a relative of John Greenleaf Whittier. David and Caroline Reed Hobart had three children; Dwight and two younger sisters, Elizabeth and Clara Hobart.

²I have secured most of the information for this chapter from the Hobart family records and from the late Mrs. T. D. Hobart of Pampa, Texas. In some instances I have quoted almost verbatim from these sources without using the quotations. Mrs. Hobart died March 4, 1949, at the age of eighty-nine.

The Reverend James Hobart spent much time in the David Hobart home in his latter days and he wielded a great influence on his grandson Dwight, both by precept and example. The grandfather, a strict disciplinarian of the old Puritan school, saw to it that Dwight as a child walked circumspectly at all times. On one occasion when the lad departed slightly from the straight and narrow way, the grandfather invoked "the curse and wrath of God upon Dwight for playing on the Sabbath." Dwight's parents lived simply but frugally on their Vermont farm. The son, therefore, in his early formative years, became thoroughly imbued with a strict, religious way of life which was supplemented with an experienced understanding of thrift and hard work.

Moreover, the indomitable courage, perseverance, and determination of his ancestors were strong traits in the boy Dwight and the man T. D. Hobart. Dwight was a strong and vigorous youth. His years of labor on his father's farm developed in him a love for the great outdoors. He was fond of hunting, fishing, trapping, skating, sleighing, and coasting down the snow-capped Vermont hills during the long winter evenings. He had a reputation among his playmates for climbing and walking. These outdoor sports developed for Dwight a strong physique. He was also "a boy who was always looking for better things, and he always insisted on fair play," wrote one of his boyhood friends years afterwards. Dwight Hobart was a close observer, he had an analytical mind, and he came to be a keen observer of nature and the natural life about him. These traits and qualities, well grounded in the youth in his early childhood, were destined to play an important role in his later life.

As a young man Dwight Hobart possessed indomitable energy and unlimited courage. Failure and disappointment did not daunt him, but rather spurred him on to greater effort.

He³ had a cheerful disposition and a keen sense of humor which developed and ripened with age and maturity. An inherent sense of right and wrong was woven into the very fibre of his being. Industry, integrity, and perseverance, together with a capable mind and a true sense of justice became fixed traits in his character at an early age.

Dwight was an ambitious lad. From his early childhood he longed for an education. He graduated from the public schools at Berlin, and later attended the Montpelier Seminary and Barre Academy. His greatest childhood ambition was to finish at Dartmouth College. But the ill health of his father placed upon him large responsibilities for the care of the family and the farm, and this kept him from realizing one of his most cherished ambitions. Undaunted, however, by these handicaps he continued his education at home. He was a great lover of history and he read eagerly every historical work that came into his hands. As a result he became widely read. In later life he became greatly interested in the history of his native state, and in the history of Texas and the Southwest. In school he also excelled in mathematics and this gave him a foundation that was of inestimable value to him in the work that he was to do in later life. Furthermore, he had a natural inclination for law and he became proficient in this subject as a result of his wide reading and practical experience.

Before Hobart was twenty years of age he began teaching school. His success as a school man was attested by the fact that he was elected superintendent of the Berlin schools when he was twenty-one; a position which he held for four years. As superintendent he was required to hold two annual ex-

³ When Dwight Hobart decided to teach he applied to the superintendent of schools at Berlin for the examinations required for the teacher's certificate. He took the examination and failed. The next year he returned for the same tests and passed with one hundred percent in every subject. Not being satisfied with this, he applied to a second examiner at the town of Barre who had a reputation for his rigid tests. Again he passed with one hundred per cent in every subject.

Mrs. T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, July, 1940.

aminations for all applicants for each of the twelve schools under his jurisdiction, and also to visit and to retain a certain amount of supervision over the schools. He also served as Chairman of Auditors in Berlin for several years; a position which required him to examine and sign all town records. In all of this work Hobart's success was outstanding, but it was not the kind of work he wanted to engage in for a lifetime profession. He began, therefore, to make plans for a different career.

Adjoining the Hobart farm in Vermont was the 235-acre Warren farm. Judge A. K. Warren was a widely respected citizen of Berlin and a good farmer. The youngest child of the Warren family was a girl, Minnie Wood Warren, four years younger than Dwight. Dwight and Minnie went to school together and were good friends from childhood. This friendship ripened into a deeper attachment as the couple grew older, culminating finally in an enduring love that never dimmed as the years went by.

As Dwight Hobart grew into young manhood the early pioneering instincts of the family began to manifest themselves in this representative of a new generation. Through relatives young Hobart had heard much about the West, and he began to think seriously of going out into the new country where he could become independent and make a name for himself. Yet he had a deep sense of loyalty to his family which seemed to force him to remain on the family farm where he could care for them. In 1881 he went to Washington, D. C., where he witnessed the inauguration of President James A. Garfield. This seems to have made a profound impression on young Hobart, and it may have been a factor in helping him to make his decision to leave home. At least by 1881 his mind was made up and he began to make his plans accordingly. He made improvements at the family homestead that would make the operation of the farm as easy as possible. He went into the forest

and felled trees from the old Jones Brook, hauled the logs to the mill, and secured the lumber to make the needed improvements on the farm. He made an addition to the farm home, built a new barn, and provided every comfort that his ingenious mind could devise.

For sometime Hobart had been considering an offer of employment by a relative, J. W. Hobart, who was superintendent of the Northern Pacific Railroad. But in 1881 Major Ira H. Evans, a cousin of Hobart, visited Berlin and gave him an opportunity to go to Texas in the employ of the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited. Hobart accepted this offer and left Vermont October 31, 1882, for Palestine, Texas, which at that time was the headquarters for the New York and Texas Land Company. He began his career in Texas with a debt of several hundred dollars, with a family that relied on him chiefly for support, and a salary of thirty dollars per month.

Hobart's first work in Texas was to act as town lot agent for the New York and Texas Land Company in disposing of a portion of the Company's lands lying along the International and Great Northern Railroad. In 1882 Hobart accompanied a surveying expedition into the Laredo country and in 1883, as a surveyor, he assisted in organizing a party in San Antonio for the purpose of surveying lands belonging to the New York and Texas Land Company in the Pecos River country. In March, 1885, he went on a second expedition into the Pecos River country where he spent six months in surveying his company's lands in Kinney, Maverick, Dimmitt, Zavala, Uvalde, Frio, and Webb counties.⁴ After spending several months in locating and surveying lands in these unsettled frontier counties Hobart made a short trip to Michigan to see his fiance who was at that time visiting her sister.

⁴ Address of T. D. Hobart to the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, 1929. MS.; *Who's Who in Texas*, Who's Who Publishing Company, Dallas, Texas, 1931. Emory E. Bailey (ed).

In 1886 Hobart was sent to the Texas Panhandle where he was put in charge of more than a million acres of the New York and Texas Company's lands. He established his headquarters in the frontier town of Mobeetie, in Wheeler County, in an office with Temple Houston, youngest son of General Sam Houston, and began at once to locate, survey, and lease his company's lands. Hobart was now established in the state of his adoption. After six years of hard but successful labor he returned to Vermont to claim the hand of the girl he had chosen for a life companion.

Minnie Wood Warren was educated in the schools of her native Berlin, Vermont. She later visited an aunt and attended school for a year at Mooers, New York. She completed her college education at the Vermont Methodist Seminary and Female College at Montpelier. Minnie Warren was also reared in a religious atmosphere. When she was twenty-two years of age she and her mother joined the Congregational Church together. However, the family had been regular church attendants practically all of Minnie's life. "As I think back on those childhood days," she wrote, "my mind pictures our church with its two-day services. After the morning service and Sunday School, the congregation again came together for the second sermon after a light lunch.

"A flight of stairs from the vestry led up to the choir loft. This placed the choir at the back and greatly elevated. While the last hymn was being sung the entire congregation as they stood up, turned about, facing the choir."⁵ This church which nurtured the Warren family in their religious faith, with its tall spire pointing heavenward, stands today as a silent and impressive reminder of a deep and abiding faith in God by a people whose religion had been thoroughly grounded in the old Puritan theology.

⁵ MS. Address Mrs. T. D. Hobart to The Pioneer Club Canadian, Texas, 1940. In Hobart family records.

The Warren home, a large two-story frame structure, set like a gem in the beautiful Green Mountain hills of Vermont, gave evidence of culture and refinement. Dwight Hobart had played here as a child with the one who was now to become his bride. He loved this home with its hills, its forests, and its streams. In later years he came to possess it because of its sacred memories, its traditions, and its history.⁶ It was at the Warren homestead on September 20, 1888, that a long-continued romance was concluded by the marriage of Timothy Dwight Hobart and Minnie Wood Warren.

The wedding tour of the young couple included the trip to Texas, their future home. The journey began with a trip to Albany, New York, by way of Lake Champlain; and thence down the Hudson River to New York City; from there to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, Chicago, Kansas City, and on to Texas. There was nothing unusual about the trip from Berlin, Vermont, to Kansas City, but from Kansas City to Texas it was something new and different. This lap of the journey lay in the new frontiers of the Southwest and was in complete contrast to the whole environment in which the young bride had grown up. The West at that time was almost completely isolated from the East. It was a world within itself and it was largely a man's world. The Southern Kansas Railway had just built into the Texas Panhandle the year before and settlers were just beginning to come in. The Southwest was yet a cattle country and vast herds still grazed and grew fat on the western ranges. Windmills, well drills, and barbed wire were just being introduced on a large scale. A few Indians still lingered around Fort Elliott and Mobeetie. In fact many evidences of the Old West could be seen on every hand. On the other hand many innovations that were being made gave sufficient evidence that a new era was in the making.

⁶ The Warren homestead formed a part of the Hobart properties until 1943.

However, it was indeed a new and strange land that Minnie Warren Hobart discovered after leaving Kansas City. The young couple travelled on a mixed train with only one or two passenger coaches and with little or no comfort. "The passengers, too, looked different, and there was a large percent of rough looking men among them. In fact 'that girl from Vermont was about the only woman in the car'," wrote Mrs. Hobart years afterwards. "At that time," she said, "Kansas was a bare, desolate looking state, and the Indian Territory, also in our line of travel, a jumping off place it seemed.

"And then we reached Miami (Texas), about seventeen miles from our destination, Mobeetie, which had been the headquarters of my husband the previous two years. It was night and we were to spend the night in Miami, going to the Baldwin House, the only hotel there. This, too, was a strange experience for we ascended a stairway outside the hotel to the second story and a very bare looking room. A wooden box, standing on end with a tin wash basin, one broken chair, and a bed were the only furniture in the room. Never mind, I was happy, and this matter of leaving comforts, or even luxuries of a good home two thousand miles away, was never allowed to creep in and spoil things."⁷

For the last stage of the journey Hobart had his own private conveyance, a buckboard and a team "of spanking grey horses."⁸ The seventeen-mile trip was made in short order, but nature helped to conclude the wedding tour by introducing the bride to a "most fearful, genuine dust storm." The bride held onto her hat "with both hands and he (Hobart) felt strange misgivings as to what her reactions would be to this Panhandle country."

⁷ Mrs. T. D. Hobart as cited.

⁸ P. G. Omohundro of Beaumont, Texas, who was in the employ of Hobart at this time, in a letter to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, and dated June 12, 1916, gives the names of these two horses—Hunter and Silver Tail. They were fast steppers and had plenty of action. One can easily imagine that this splendid team trotted briskly and proudly over the seventeen-mile stretch of prairie from Miami to Mobeetie, as they carried this young couple to their future home. Hobart Letter files, Pampa, Texas.

For some months the young couple sojourned at the Huselby House, Mobeetie's chief hostelry. Mobeetie, a straggling frontier village, was only a decade old, but it was then in the heyday of its existence. Fort Elliott which was located a mile west of the town, with its flags fluttering in the breezes, was about the only visible evidence that the Panhandle village was within the confines of civilization. Indeed Mobeetie was an isolated village out on the very fringes of civilization.

It was in this far away frontier that Timothy Dwight and Minnie Warren Hobart established a home and began life together. Along with many other young and adventurous pioneers they began to clear the wilderness country for a new culture that was different in many respects from any culture that the western frontier had yet produced.

"The Autumn and Winter months were filled with happy and exciting experiences," wrote Mrs. Hobart. "My husband's business took him over a large part of the Panhandle and I often accompanied him on these camping trips. There were no fences and often no trace of a road or even a trail. It was a marvelous thing to me how we always went to the intended spot as we drove swiftly across the country with no sign of tree or habitation. My husband would occasionally stop at a place, get down and poke in the weeds and grass and uncover an iron pipe driven into the ground which marked a section corner.

"The entire expanse extending miles upon miles was almost like a map to his practiced eye. To see any kind of camp or house in the distance, was to me an exciting sight. Behind us followed our cook with camp and mess outfit, with a saddle horse tied along side his hack. I had never seen a dugout or a covered wagon. They were interesting sights to me. I shall never forget that one of the first dugouts I saw was in Collingsworth County. I was captivated both by it and the couple living there, everything neat and nice, and they were seemingly

fine people. They were from the state of New York I learned.

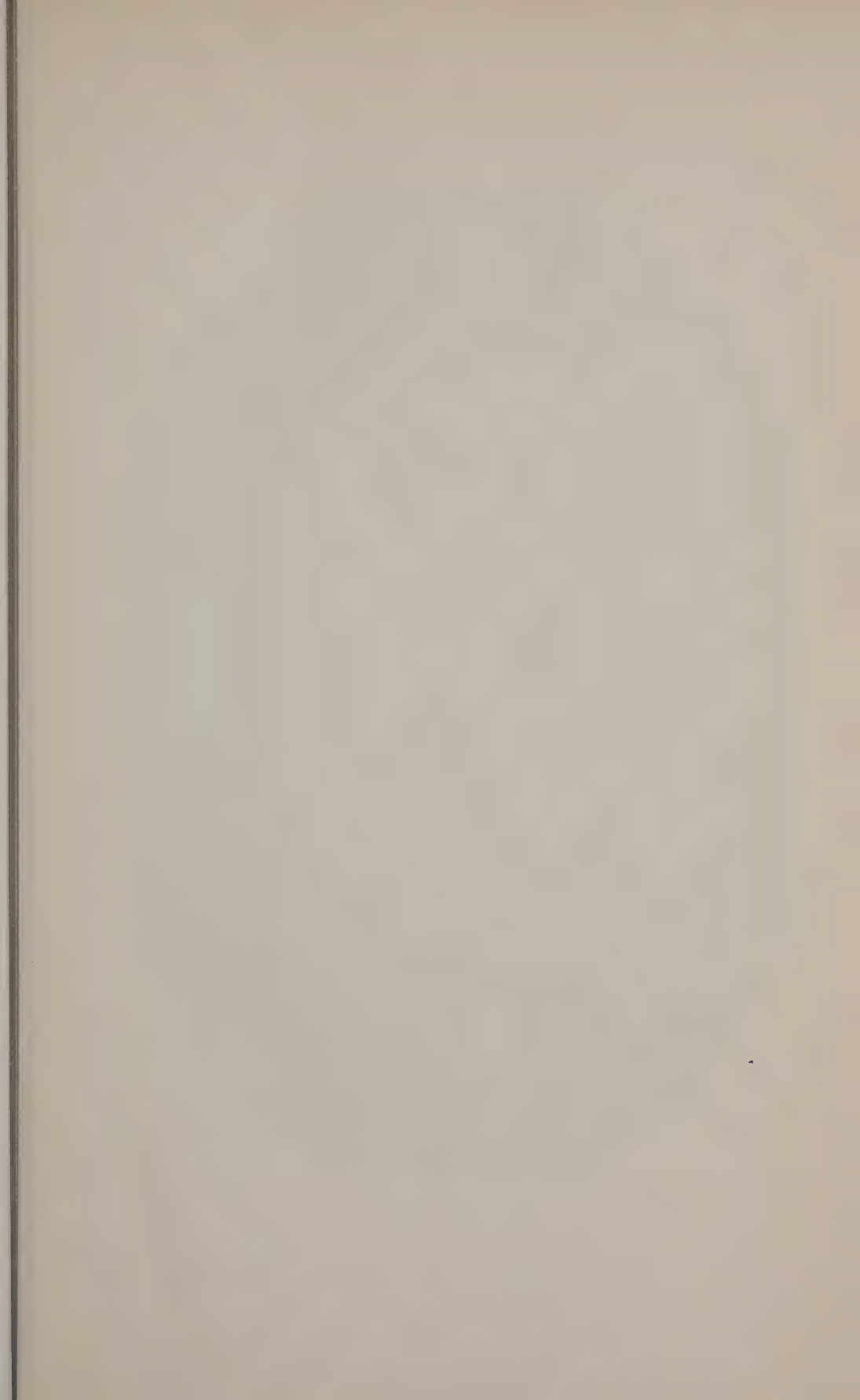
"In Mobeetie we attended a Union Sunday School held in the school house every Sunday morning. Occasionally there was a church service during those years of '89 and '90, but not regularly.

"I found the people in Mobeetie pleasant and sociable and I was never lonely or homesick. Numerous cowboys often gathered on the streets or in the saloons. They also came in to Mobeetie to the dances. It was my experience that they were always courteous and polite. . . .

"There was a very pleasant drive from Mobeetie, one mile, with its road of great width and hardpan surface like a pavement, to the Government Military Post at Fort Elliott with its officers, soldiers, and Indian Scouts. My husband had bought me a canopy-top phaeton and a bay pony, and with friends I often found this ride very pleasant and interesting. The encampment of Indian Scouts furnished a novel sight with their squaws, papoose and numerous dogs. The dogs furnished a large part of their meat it was said.

"I felt as fearful of the squaws as the Indian men. Often when walking past the stores in Mobeetie I would feel someone pulling my shawl from behind, and there would be the most cruel looking squaw with her blanket reaching to her feet and insisting that I should give her my shawl, a part of my trousseau. As quickly as possible I would slip inside some store to get away."

Within a few months after the young Vermont couple arrived at Mobeetie they had identified themselves with the citizenry and had begun a long and eventful career. A branch of the Hobart family had now been transplanted into the soil of the Texas Panhandle where it took permanent hold. The work of pioneering on new frontiers, which the Hobarts had begun so auspiciously on the first American frontier in the seventeenth century, was now resumed in Texas on one of the





MRS. T. D. HOBART

last American frontiers. This was the longest trek the Hobart family had made to frontier lands since the Reverend Peter Hobart landed on American soil in 1635.

In 1887, before his marriage, T. D. Hobart acquired a tract of land at the head of the Washita River in Hemphill County. Here was the first home of the Hobart family. In the years that followed Hobart acquired other lands adjoining the original tract and developed one of the most beautiful and one of the best equipped ranches in the Texas Panhandle.

The first and second generations of the Hobart family born in Texas are: Warren Reed, deceased in infancy; Warren Dwight, deceased at nineteen; Frederick Abel, who married Minerva Jones of Utopia, Texas, and who now operates the Washita Ranch in connection with other ranch properties. Fred and Minerva Hobart have three children, Marilyn Hobart Campbell, Jr., and Minerva and Timothy Dwight Hobart. Laura Prescott Hobart married Clyde Fatheree, a druggist of Pampa, Texas, where they now reside. They have three sons: Clyde Warren, Eugene Hobart, and Joel David. Mary Reed Hobart, who is now Mrs. W. G. Hutchinson, resides at Arkansas City, Kansas, where her husband is connected with the Ramsey-Davis Mercantile Company. Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson have two daughters: Priscilla Ann and Pamela Hobart Hutchinson.

In 1886 T. D. Hobart embarked on a career that was to make him a well known leader in Texas as a colonizer, ranchman, highly respected citizen, and one of the best land men that Texas has ever produced. He came to Texas when the western part of the state was an unsettled domain and was considered a part of the Great American Desert. He contributed much toward transforming this region into a thriving and prosperous stock-farming country. The story of his work in Texas will be related in the following chapters.

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN IN WEST TEXAS

WHEN T. D. HOBART came to Texas in 1882 the state was young and it had just gone through its first stages of development. Its resources were undeveloped and much of its territory was yet unexplored. In 1886 when Hobart took charge of the New York Company's Panhandle lands, it had been only fifty years since Texas had declared its independence and set up the Republic. During the days of the Republic West Texas was still inhabited by the Indians, and millions of buffalo were grazing on the West Texas prairies. Hobart's expeditions to Southwest Texas in 1882 and in 1885, and his assignment to the Texas Panhandle in the following year introduced him to virgin lands where he was to find his life's work. It is desirable, therefore, to give a brief survey of the historical background of this new and undeveloped country in order that the reader might have a clearer understanding of the more recent phases of the development of the region.

Despite the fact that this was a virgin land, the historical background of West Texas reaches back to the sixteenth century. In fact West Texas was partially explored almost a century before the Jamestown settlement was made in 1607. The first white men to set foot on Texas soil were Spaniards. Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions, who were shipwrecked off the coast of Texas in 1528, explored much of the Lower Rio Grande Valley before they crossed over into Mexico. DeVaca was followed soon afterwards by the Friar Marcos de Niza who, in seeking to save the souls of the natives of the New World, heard many stories of the fabulous wealth in the lands to the north and east. From this time forward West Texas was a land of enchantment. The Spanish Conquistadors had their minds and hearts attuned to the discovery of gold and silver and they listened eagerly to the fantastic stories the Indians told of

the great riches to be found on the far away Spanish frontiers. Mexico and Peru had produced these precious metals in great abundance, so why should not these stories of great wealth in the North be true? Therefore, the King of Spain and the Council of the Indies were persuaded to finance an expedition to explore the region.

Francisco Vasquez Coronado, a young ambitious adventurer, was chosen to lead the expedition. Well equipped and full of confidence, he led his men into the plains of West Texas in 1541 in search of the coveted land of Quivira. The expedition was an utter failure from a political and economic standpoint, but it aroused an interest in this unexplored region that gathered momentum with each succeeding century until West Texas came into possession of civilized man. Even though Coronado declared that the land was unfit for human habitation by the white man, yet the Spanish continued their missionary and colonizing efforts until they lost their empire in the New World.

The stories of the enchanted lands of the Southwest were still current when Hobart came to Texas and he immediately became an avid reader and student of the history of Texas and the Southwest.

In fact the interest in Texas and the Southwest was never allowed to wane in the nineteenth century. No sooner had Spain lost her colonies in the New World than the United States began an expansive movement that was to reach its first climax in the middle of the century with the annexation of the territory to the United States. There were several factors that kept this interest alive and active. The French Revolution and Napoleonic wars in Europe, with the consequent policy of neutrality of the United States, turned the attention of the young republic toward the West. The acquisition of the Louisiana Territory by the United States in 1803, the Anglo-American colonization of Texas from 1821 to 1836, the dis-

covery of gold in California in 1848, and the war between the United States and Mexico gave much impetus to the westward movement in America. By the middle of the century the United States had acquired all of the territory west of the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, lying between the forty-ninth parallel of latitude on the north and the present boundary between the United States and Mexico, with the exception of the territory acquired by the Gadsden Purchase in 1853.

The interest in Texas and the Southwest became more general and widespread in the United States as a result of exploring expeditions that were sent into the region during the first half of the century. General James Wilkinson sent Phillip Nolan on a mission of exploration into Texas before this territory came into possession of the United States. The United States Government sponsored and financed several expeditions into the Southwest during this period. Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike was sent on an expedition into the Southwest in 1806 in search of the head waters of the Red River. He missed his course and was captured by the governor of New Mexico. He was sent back to the United States by way of Chihuahua and San Antonio.¹ The rapid increase in trade along the Santa Fe Trail and the discovery of gold in California in 1848 made Santa Fe the focal point of a number of expeditions into the Southwest. Josiah Gregg made eight trips² from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Santa Fe in the 1830's and laid out the first trail between the two towns. In 1841 President Mirabeau Lamar of the Texas Republic fitted out an expedition to Santa Fe for the purpose of strengthening the political and commercial ties between the eastern and western parts of the Republic. This expedition failed in its immediate objectives, but it aroused a new interest in the political and commercial possibilities for Anglo-Americans in the Southwest.

¹ Captain Randolph B. Marcy: Report, *Exploration of the Red River of Louisiana*, 1852, p. 3.

² Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, Preface.

One of the most important expeditions into the Southwest during this period was made by Captain Randolph B. Marcy. On April 2, 1849, Marcy received orders from the Military Department of the United States Government to proceed from Fort Smith, Arkansas, "along the valley of the main Canadian, wholly on the south side of the river, by the most direct practicable route, to your destination, Santa Fe, New Mexico." The purpose of the expedition was to establish an emigrant trail to California which would afford "protection to our citizens emigrating to our newly acquired territories."³ Captain Marcy was instructed to select the best route he could find for water, wood, and travel, and to establish friendly relations with the Indians. Marcy's trail from Fort Smith to Santa Fe crossed the northern Texas Panhandle. He returned by way of El Paso, and from there he followed along the present route of the Texas and Pacific Railroad until he turned north to Fort Smith, where he arrived on November 20, 1849. This trail is significant for West Texas because it tied this region in closely with California and the Southwest. Moreover, it is interesting to notice that Marcy travelled over practically the same territory in West Texas that Coronado explored three hundred years before, and that the impressions the country made on the two men were almost identical. Marcy gave the following description of the elevated Texas plains: "We have passed over a high rolling prairie for the last three days, destitute of wood, except a narrow fringe of trees upon the borders of the ravines—a soil worthless and utterly unfit for cultivation. . . . When we were upon the high table-land, a view presented itself as boundless as the ocean. Not a tree, shrub, or any other object, either animate or inanimate, relieved the dreary monotony of the prospect; it was a vast-illimitable expanse of desert prairie—the dreaded 'Llano Estacado' of New Mexico; or, in other

³ Grant Foreman (ed), *Marcy & the Gold Seekers*, pp. 148-149; *The Journal of Captain R. B. Marcy*.

words, the great Zahara of North America. It is a region almost as vast and trackless as the ocean—a land where no man, either savage or civilized, permanently abides; it spreads forth into a treeless, desolate waste of uninhabited solitude, which always has been, and must continue, uninhabited forever; even the savages dare not venture to cross it except at two or three places, where they know water can be found. . . . It would seem as if the Creator had designed this as an immense natural barrier, beyond which agriculturalists should not pass—leaving the great prairies for the savage to roam over at will.”⁴

Marcy explored much of the territory in the Texas Panhandle from 1849 to 1852 in an effort to locate the head waters of the Red River.⁵ Little was done in the way of exploration in the Southwest after 1852 on account of the approaching conflict between the states which stopped any further efforts at expansion for more than a decade. When Hobart came to Texas the stories of these expeditions were still current. He studied them both from the written records and from first hand observation in an effort to locate the trails of the explorers.

In Texas the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century was a period of organization and adjustment in state, national, and international affairs. The boundaries of the state as they exist today were not fixed permanently until 1850. The first boundaries as determined by the Florida Treaty in 1819, and the Velasco Treaty in 1836, gave the Republic of Texas a vast unsettled domain which included the eastern half of New Mexico, the Oklahoma Panhandle, portions of Kansas and

⁴ Grant Foreman, as cited pp. 148-151, 231-232, 249. Marcy passed along what is known as the Ridge Route between the Canadian and Washita rivers, some ten miles south of the town of Canadian, thence along the head of Red Deer and Dixon creeks in Gray County, and from there on into the Tucumcari country. At Timbered Creek, now known as White Deer Creek, the wife of one of the emigrants gave birth to twin boys. The father named one of them Dillard, after Captain Dillard of the expedition, and the other Marcy. This is the first record of a white child born in the Texas Panhandle.

T. D. Hobart, Pampa, to Miss Hattie M. Anderson, Canyon, Texas, October 21, 1929; C. M. O'Donel, Bell Ranch, New Mexico, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, September 3, 1924. Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

⁵ Randolph B. Marcy Report: *Exploration of the Red River of Louisiana*, 1852. Washington (D. C.), 1854, p. 1.

Colorado, and a strip of territory in southern Wyoming.⁶ During the period from 1836 to 1850 Texas had aspirations to extend her boundaries to the Pacific to include the territory south and west of the Florida Treaty line, and also to annex the states along the northern border of New Mexico. During this period, therefore, Texas acquired an international status that no other state in the Union ever attained.

From a geographical standpoint also Texas occupied a rather precarious if not an enviable position. It was considered a part of the territory which came to be known as the great Southwest, and it lay between the United States and Mexico. Therefore, both countries wanted to possess it. Moreover, the strategic location of Texas gave to the Republic an international importance in Europe as well as in the New World. England, France, the United States, and Mexico were all interested both in the boundaries and the political status of the Republic.

Throughout the period from 1836 to 1850 one of the chief problems of the Texas government was to occupy the unsettled western domain, and to incorporate this region into the body politic. Since Santa Fe, according to the Treaty of Velasco, was within the boundaries of the Republic, this historic city became largely the focus of international rivalries, especially between the United States and Mexico. These rivalries were intensified by becoming involved with slavery and the expansion movement in the United States. When Texas was admitted into the Union, Mexico and the United States engaged in war, and the whole territory of Texas and the Southwest became involved. After Texas was admitted into the Union it limited its ter-

⁶ Phillips Coolidge Brooks, *Diplomacy and the Borderlands*, Appendix I, pp. 205-215; William C. Binkley, *The Expansionist Movement in Texas*, p. 17. Only a few minor changes have been made in the boundaries of Texas since 1850. Changes were made along the Red and Rio Grande rivers due to changes in the course of these streams. Some adjustments were also made along the 100th and the 103rd meridians on account of discrepancies between the map locations of these meridian lines and the actual geographical locations when the surveys were run.

See Newton and Gambrell, *History of Texas*, chapter 15; J. Evetts Haley, *The XIT Ranch of Texas*, pp. 63-66; "Some Memoirs of W. S. Mabry," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, II, pp. 31-52.

ritorial claims to the boundaries as fixed by the treaties of 1819 and 1836. However, the territorial claims of the newly admitted state brought it into conflict with both the people of New Mexico and the United States Government. This phase of the struggle centered mainly in the efforts of the Texas and United States governments to get control of the lands west of the 100th meridian, and extending to the Rio Grande River. The struggle became more intense as a result of the war between the United States and Mexico. During the war United States troops occupied Santa Fe and refused to yield jurisdiction to the Texas government until the United States Congress took action.⁷

Texas' greatest difficulty was the inability to occupy the territory west of the 100th meridian: the Indians were too formidable, and the distance between Austin and Santa Fe was too great. However, in 1847-1848 the Texans attempted to bring the whole region under their political and civil jurisdiction by organizing counties along the eastern Rio Grande.⁸ But this only had the effect of arousing opposition of the people of Santa Fe, and encouraging national resistance in the United States to the claims of Texas. As a result the Texans assumed a belligerent attitude and threatened to secede from the Union if the boundaries which Texas had in 1845 were not recognized.

Moreover, the Texas-New Mexico boundary dispute became involved with the question of slavery. The Wilmot Proviso raised the question as to whether or not the territory acquired from Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo should be free or slave territory. The application of California for admission into the Union and the great debates of 1850 made the acquisition of Texas and the Southwest a national

⁷ For an excellent detailed discussion of this question see, William C. Binkley, *The Expansionist Movement in Texas, 1836-1852*.

⁸ Nueces, Webb, Starr, Praesidio, El Paso, Worth, and Santa Fe counties were created in 1848, and attempts were made to organize these counties. W. C. Binkley, *The Expansionist Movement in Texas*, p. 157 and following.

issue. The South was soon up in arms over the attempts of the North to exclude slavery from the newly acquired territory. Thus the Texas boundary question became a part of the Compromise of 1850.

This compromise measure provided that the northeastern boundary of the Texas Panhandle should begin where the parallel of latitude 36 degrees and 30 minutes cuts the 100th meridian and extend to the 103rd meridian. The 103rd meridian, also a compromise line, formed the northwestern boundary of Texas down to its intersection with the 32nd parallel of latitude, and thence along this line west to the Rio Grande River.⁹ Texas ceded all of her lands north and west of these boundaries to the United States, and in return the national government assumed ten million dollars worth of the state's debt. Texas still had millions of acres in her public domain and most of these lands lay west of the 100th meridian. For another quarter of a century Texas was confronted with the problem of occupying these lands.

From time immemorial West Texas had been the home of the red man. Whence and when the Indians came into this region neither the scientist nor the historian have been able to determine. Scientists tell us that the first Indian inhabitants of the plains were sedentary Indians; that they lived in villages, built their houses of stone and mortar, and developed a form of agriculture. The ruins of these ancient villages, many of which have been uncovered in recent years by archaeologists, reveal that these early inhabitants developed a relatively high degree of culture. Their tools, implements, buildings, burial remains, and other artifacts give abundant evidence that they developed a rather advanced technique in the use of stone. They had no domesticated animals for transportation, except the dog, and their whole round of life for generations was confined to small areas. They lived partly by the chase and there-

⁹ William C. Binkley, *The Expansionist Movement in Texas*, p. 215.

fore became adepts at stalking their prey. Wild game was abundant and meat was provided from this source, supplemented by their agricultural pursuits, which made it possible for them to eke out an existence.¹⁰ The lack of transportation and communication prevented frequent contacts among the Indians, and this isolated existence insured a long period of peace for their cultural development.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, the sedentary Indians of the Southwest had either abandoned their homes, or they had been driven out by other invading tribes. They were followed by more savage and nomadic tribes who, after the Spaniards introduced the domesticated horse into the New World, caught up these animals and became the most expert horsemen of all times.¹¹

The horse revolutionized the whole manner of living of the plains Indians; their range was enlarged, their standards of living were raised, and their savage traits were intensified. The horse brought comfort, luxury, and power to the plains Indians. For more than two centuries the Spaniards tried to drive these mounted nomads from the southwestern plains, but they were never able to match the Indians' military prowess or their knowledge of the topography of the region. Nor were the Anglo-Americans ever able to drive these mounted warriors from their native haunts until the industrial revolution provided them with new means of communication, new tools, and new weapons. No people have ever adapted themselves more perfectly to the plains environment than the nomadic Indians; for the horse had given them a lease on life in this region for almost four centuries. During this time they became an invincible foe of the white man. They stole thousands of horses

¹⁰ For a brief discussion of the prehistoric Indian in the Texas Panhandle, see Floyd V. Studer, "Hunting Indians in the Panhandle-Plains Museum," in *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, VII, pp. 79-95. Also Warren K. Moorehead, *Archaeology of the Arkansas River Valley*, pp. 92-141.

¹¹ Richard I. Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, pp. 425-427.

and cattle along the edges of the settlements, took a heavy toll of human life in their forays, and then found safe retreats in the rough, unoccupied country of West Texas.

West Texas was admirably suited for such raiding purposes. Topographically this region is a series of plateaus extending toward the west and north. The highest of these plateaus, the Texas Panhandle, embraces the region of Northwest Texas. The Llano Estacado drains toward the south and east, and its drainage system forms the head streams of three of the largest rivers in Texas—the Colorado, the Brazos, and the Red rivers. For centuries these streams have flowed off the high wall along the eastern escarpment of the Llano Estacado, and have cut deep, narrow canyons back into the plains for miles like the teeth of a saw. These canyons, together with the rough breaks country that extends a width of some forty miles along the eastern edge of the Panhandle, formed a natural fortress for the nomads of the plains. Once hidden away in the deep recesses of the canyons they were safe from attack. Moreover, the Canadian River Valley, which cuts diagonally across the northern part of the Texas Panhandle, furnished an excellent retreat for the plains warriors. This valley with its rough hill country, cut through with deep arroyos, its deep sands and sage brush, its sandy streams, and its secret coves made it almost inaccessible to the uninitiated plainsmen. When the Indians were finally driven out of these canyons they still had the Pecos country, with its vast plains and rough mountains, as a place of refuge. Thus, despite the several exploring expeditions that had been made into West Texas, its breaks country was little known until after the Civil War. The result was that for almost a half century after Texas was admitted into the Union all of West Texas, west of the 100th meridian, remained the habitat of the Indian and the buffalo. For three hundred years after the Spaniards first set foot on West Texas

soil the region continued to be an Indian's paradise. In fact little effort had been made by the white man to occupy it.

After the war between the states new impetus was given to the westward movement. The prostrate South offered little in the way of political fortune or economic opportunity. After the fall of the Southern Confederacy outlets for much of the material force of the nation were sought in the new West. The cheap virgin lands of the Southwest offered an avenue of escape for both the surplus labor of the industrial North and those whose homes and fortunes had been ruined in the South. In this region also were boundless opportunities for the capitalists of the triumphant North. Both people and capital were essential to the development of the frontier, and in future years people from both the North and South were to meet and build a new civilization on the old Spanish frontier. A certain amount of preparation has to be made for the occupation of any frontier region, but forces were already under way that were to lead to the conquest and occupation of this last land frontier.

These developments in the West were hastened by the rapid strides that were made in the field of applied science. Immediately following the Civil War railroads were extended toward the Pacific coast and settlements began to push out into the new lands. New tools and implements were invented, a new system of farming was begun, and a new frontier technique was developed. When the westward movement was once again turned toward the Southwest it gathered momentum rapidly and the innovations made were almost revolutionary.

But before West Texas could become the home of the Anglo-Americans the buffalo and the Indians had to be removed. They stood in the way of the white man's advance and deprived him of the free grass on the state's public domain. It was the old story over again of the civilized man's conquest over the barbarian. This last act of the drama in the struggle

between the two hostile races was filled with stirring events, but gradually the irresistible force of the Anglo-Saxon march toward the Southwest swept aside the less stable nomadic tribes of the plains. The final chapter in the struggle was written with the slaughter of the buffalo during the decade from 1870 to 1880. When the railroads tapped the heart of the buffalo country and the demand for leather in the North and East increased, the southern plains became a paradise for sportsmen, hunters, and traders.

The buffalo hunters established the first great business enterprise in the Southwest, and formed the vanguard for settlers in this region. Fort Dodge, Fort Elliott, and Fort Griffin became the centers and supply stations for a vast and lucrative hide business that extended over the entire southern plains. Conrad and Rath, York and Draper, and Lee and Reynolds were among the first large concerns to engage in the buffalo hide business. These firms purchased hundreds of thousands of hides from smaller independent outfits in the Llano Estacado. Buffalo hide camps were scattered all over the southern plains. Rath and Hamburg had a picket store on Teepee Creek in Motley County which was well known as a hide center for the rough breaks country east of the Caprock of the Llano Estacado. Further to the south in the Double Mountain country Rath and Reynolds had a supply station, called Reynolds City which kept fifteen ox teams busy hauling hides.¹² Pete Snyder had a skin tepee where the town square of Snyder now is and he supplied hunters with everything they needed. He had four or five yokes of steers which he kept on the road to Fort Worth and back all the time.¹³ Causey Brothers were located on the Yellow House Canyon in the Lubbock country.

¹² R. Dick Bussell, Canadian, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, Texas, July 29, 1926. Interview, Panhandle-Plains Museum.

¹³ J. W. Woody, Snyder, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, Texas, February 11, 1926; J. H. Nunn, Snyder, Texas, to Mrs. Omah Ryan, Snyder, Texas, July 26, 1937. Interviews, Files Panhandle Plains Museum, Canyon.

where they collected thousands of hides. The old stockade at Adobe Walls, on the north bank of the Canadian River in Hutchinson County, was one of the best known buffalo camps in the Northern Panhandle. This stockade and its surrounding territory yielded thousands of hides to the yards of Rath and Hamburg at Dodge City.¹⁴

These hide stations were significant, not only because they were clearing stations for a vast army of hide hunters, but also because they marked the first Anglo-American place names in Northwest Texas. Moreover, each one of these hide stations was located at the end of a wagon trail, and all of these wagon trails converged at Fort Elliott and Fort Griffin to form two great networks of trails. One network of trails led from Fort Elliott on to Fort Dodge, Kansas, and the other pointed into the Fort Griffin-Fort Worth Trail. After the buffalo slaughter was over the Dodge Trail continued to be the main line of transportation for the people of the Northern Panhandle until the Southern Kansas Railroad built into the Texas Panhandle in 1887-1888. When the Texas and Pacific Railroad built into West Texas in 1881 the people of the South Plains abandoned the rough breaks country between the Caprock and Fort Griffin, and went to Colorado City for their supplies. Although the first commercial enterprise and the first lines of transportation in the Llano Estacado were temporary and transitory, yet they set the pattern for trade routes and business enterprise for the next quarter of a century.

A large freighting business grew up with the hide business in the Southwest. Millions of hides had to be transported by wagon trails for three and four hundred miles before they reached the eastern shipping points. This required a small army of bull whackers and mule skinner, and a vast amount of horse and man power. The larger hide buying concerns had

¹⁴ Thirty tons of lead and five tons of powder in the warehouse of Conrad and Rath at Fort Griffin alone give some idea of the magnitude of the buffalo hide business during this period. Edgar Rye, *Quirt and Spur*, p. 220.

ox trains of their own,¹⁵ and scores of others were kept busy hauling hides and supplies over the trails to Dodge City, Kansas, and to Fort Worth. The freighting business was as significant as it was unique.¹⁶ Without this business the buffalo would not have been cleared off the West Texas plains during the decade from 1870 to 1880. With the passing of the buffalo went one of the last institutions of the Old West—the ox freight teams. The freighting business, however, was not yet over, but it was greatly modified as the forces of Anglo-American civilization pushed farther out into the southwestern frontier.

The waste and wanton destruction connected with the buffalo slaughter aroused the Texas legislature, and a bill was introduced which was designed to stop the slaying of the Indian's herds of wild game. When General Phil Sheridan, who was in command of the Military Department of the Southwest with headquarters at San Antonio, heard about the bill he went to Austin and appeared before a joint assembly of the House and Senate and made a plea against the passage of the bill. Instead he urged the assembly to give a vote of thanks to the hunters, and to present each one with a bronze medal with a dead buffalo on one side and a discouraged Indian on the other. He told the assembly that "These men have done more in the last two years and will do more in the next year, to settle the vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last thirty years. They are destroying the Indian's commissary; and it is a well-known fact that an army losing its base of supplies is placed at a great disadvantage. Send them powder and

¹⁵ Lee and Reynolds, post traders at Fort Elliott, built up a large freighting business. They had twelve teams of oxen with seven yokes to each team, or 168 oxen in their train. Each team was loaded with 12,000 pounds. J. E. McAllister, Channing, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, Texas, July 1, 1926.

"At Tascosa you would see ox teams with trains a mile long. . . . What we called an outfit then would be ten wagons with eight and ten yoke of oxen to each wagon." H. Frank Mitchell, Amarillo, Texas, to Evelyn Hood, Amarillo, Texas, July, 1933.

¹⁶ Bull whackers and mule skinnners developed a language peculiar to their own trade as they cracked their whips over their teams in crossing the boggy streams of the Southern Plains.

lead, if you will; but, for the sake of lasting peace, let them kill, skin, and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated. Then your prairies can be covered with speckled cattle, and the festive cowboy, who follows the hunter as a second forerunner of an advanced civilization."¹⁷

The law was never passed. The Texas legislature, therefore, as well as the federal government, gave their tacit consent to the killing of the buffalo in the hope that it would rid the Southwest of both the Indian and the buffalo, and, in this way, the problem of occupation of West Texas would be solved.

The passing of the buffalo marks the close of an era in the history of West Texas. When the Indians were forced onto the reservations another segment of the frontier was ready for occupation. The West Texas prairies, with their abundant and nutritious grasses, were cleared for a new industry—the cattle industry: an industry that was already pushing its way along the river tributaries whose sources are in the Llano Estacado.

¹⁷ John R. Cook, *The Border and the Buffalo*, p. 113.

LAST INDIAN CAMPAIGNS IN WEST TEXAS

THE INDIANS did not give up their lands in West Texas without a desperate struggle. At the close of the Civil War the white man's advance toward the west was resumed. The ever tightening ring of forts¹ behind the white man's advance, plus the gradual encroachment of the white man into the Indian's rapidly dwindling domain, aroused his ire and whetted his savage instincts. He knew no territorial boundaries such as were fixed by his foes, and he looked upon the white man as an intruder and usurper. The Indian's ideas of land ownership were communal, and he believed he had a right to live in any part of his happy hunting ground without being disturbed. He followed his migrating herds of bison up and down the southern plains from season to season, and wherever he pitched his tepee, whether among the quiet glades of the Palo Duro or along the banks of the Canadian, this he called his home. The migrating herds of bison were his and were a part of him just as he was a part of the plains soil. They furnished him food, clothing, and shelter. He protected and conserved them because he realized that he depended upon them for his very existence.² The white man's irresistible advance, together with the indiscriminate slaughter of his buffalo herds, threatened the Indian's very existence. The Indian warriors read clearly the handwriting on the wall. This was to be their last stand; their very life was at stake.

¹ Some of the most important of these forts were: Fort Bliss, near El Paso, established in 1849; Fort Clark in Kinney County, established in 1852; Fort Stockton in Pecos County, located in 1858; Fort Concho was located near the present site of San Angelo in 1867; Fort Griffin, near Albany, in Shackelford County, established in 1866; Fort Sill in the Indian Territory, 1869; Fort Dodge, Kansas, 1864, and Fort Elliott in Wheeler County in 1875.

Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border with Mackenzie*, chapter 2; Robert M. Wright, *Dodge City The Cowboy Capital*, chapter 1; Colonel C. C. Smith, "The Southwest's Old Military Posts," *The Cattleman*, October, 1930, pp. 29-30.

² "The Indians never killed more buffalo than they could use, while most of the meat was left on the ground by the buffalo hunters." George A. Simpson, Canadian, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, November 30, 1929.

The Anglo-American, like the Indian, analyzed the situation in terms of his own background and welfare. As long as the savage red man remained on the frontier, just so long would the life and property of the frontiersman be in danger. Moreover, the Indian was on lands that belonged to the state. These lands had been acquired from Mexico by right of revolution and conquest, and from the United States by treaty rights. Here was a vast area well suited to the rapidly growing cattle industry, and capable of producing much wealth for the state; but it could not be used while the Indian remained on the public domain. The Indian was not fitted for a sedentary life; neither would he work. The two races could not live side by side as independent nations. The Indian, just outside the reach of the law, was a constant threat and menace to the frontier. Therefore he must be driven out. The Indian policy introduced by President Mirabeau Lamar of the Texas Republic in 1839 had now reached its final stages. The Indian had no rights to these lands nor to the great herds of bison that grazed upon them.

Between these two opposite extremes there was no compromise. The wide gap between the two points of view could never be bridged by mutual consent. Under these conditions the Anglo-American's "good neighbor policy" of giving gifts and making friendly treaties could only be a temporary solution at best. Treaties were made that were never kept by either side. Gifts were presented by the white man only as a means of keeping the Indians pacified temporarily. Where issues of property rights are involved, and where human rights and human life are at stake, there seems to be but one solution of the problem: war to the death.

As soon as the Civil War ended both the state and federal governments again turned their attention to the problems of the frontier.³ During the years 1868 and 1869 the Indians

³ For an excellent treatment of the Indian problem in the Southwest from 1830-1845 see Joseph Abner Hill, *The Indian Policy of the United States of the Southwestern Frontier, 1830-1845*, p. 178 and following. MS. Master's thesis, University of California,

were on a rampage of thieving and destruction all along the frontier. This provoked a war between the Indian and the Anglo-American that was not to end until the red man's spirit was crushed and his commissary was destroyed.

On November 12, 1868, General Sully with a few companies of infantrymen and 400 wagons loaded with supplies left Fort Dodge, Kansas, and headed south. Six days later Camp Supply was established near the junction of Wolf and Beaver creeks along the eastern edge of the Texas Panhandle. This camp was to be used as a base of operations for a series of campaigns against the Indians in the Southwest.⁴

On November 22nd the expedition was turned over to General George A. Custer, and General Sully returned to Fort Harker, Kansas. Custer left Camp Supply immediately with 800 or 900 men, and with guides and wagons carrying supplies. For three days Custer and his men travelled up Wolf Creek in a snow storm and crossed over the divide to the Canadian River. The expedition crossed the Canadian River near Antelope Hills, and, after four days of travel in the bitter cold, came upon the camp of the hostile Cheyennes under Chief Black Kettle on the banks of the Washita in the Texas Panhandle. Under cover of darkness Custer quietly deployed his men in four columns and surrounded the camp. At the break of day the four columns attacked Black Kettle's camp simultaneously and the Indians were surprised and quickly routed. Taking advantage of the thick brush along the stream, some of the warriors escaped through the lines of the attacking soldiers. Major Joel H. Elliott, who was in charge of one of the attacking columns, marshalled some of his men and followed the fleeing Indians. To his amazement he soon discovered that the Cheyenne camp was only one of several camps located

1916. For the period from 1846-1860 see W. C. Holden, "Frontier Defense, 1846-1860", *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*, Volume VI, pp. 35-65.

⁴ George A. Custer, *Wild Life on the Plains*, p. 193 and following.

within a few miles of each other along the Lower Washita. When the news of the attack on Black Kettle's camp spread to the adjoining camps scores of warriors rushed out to his assistance. Major Elliott and his nineteen men were surrounded and killed.⁵

The battle raged fiercely for several hours, but when the Indians finally withdrew, "103 warriors were killed, including Black Kettle, fifty-three squaws and children were captured, 875 ponies, 1123 buffalo robes and skins, 535 pounds of powder, 1050 pounds of lead, 4,000 arrows, 700 pounds of tobacco, besides rifles, pistols, saddles, bows, lariats, and immense quantities of dried meat and other provisions, the complete destruction of their village, and almost total annihilation of this Indian band".⁶

Custer, fearing an attack from the remaining hostile Indian camps did not tarry on the Washita. He permitted the squaw prisoners to select what horses they needed for transportation to the reservation, and ordered the remaining 800 horses killed to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Custer returned to Camp Supply where he remained only a short time.

On December 7th Custer and his Seventh Cavalry again swung into the saddle for another expedition into the Indian country. They were accompanied by General Phil Sheridan and his staff who were on their way to Fort Cobb, Indian Territory. Custer's forces were also augmented by a regiment of Kansas volunteers. This regiment was organized by the people of Kansas as a result of the Indian raids along the Saline, the Solomon, and the Republican rivers where much Indian plundering had occurred and many white captives taken.

Custer doubled back over his trail up Wolf Creek and across

⁵ Fort Elliott, established in 1875 on Sweetwater Creek, in Wheeler County, was named in honor of Major Elliott.

⁶ Major-General P. H. Sheridan, General Field Orders No. 6, as quoted by General George A. Custer, *Wild Life on the Plains*, p. 238.

the Canadian to the site of the battle ground of the Washita. A few miles distant from the site of the battle ground he discovered the bodies of Elliott and his men huddled together in a small circle and horribly mutilated.⁷ After giving as decent a burial to Elliott and his men as possible, Custer's expedition moved down the Washita. His purpose was to persuade all of the Indians to return to the reservation, and also to deliver the Indian squaws captured at the Battle of the Washita to the reservation at Fort Cobb.

When Custer was within fifteen miles of Fort Cobb a band of Indian warriors, mostly Kiowas, approached the command under a flag of truce, and indicated that they wanted to accompany the expedition to the reservation. After parleying for some time, Custer discovered that this was only a ruse of the Indians to engage the attention of Custer and his men while the tribes were actually fleeing in the opposite direction toward their hiding places in the Texas Panhandle. Custer arrested Lone Wolf and Satanta, chiefs of the Kiowas, and kept them under close guard. He allowed all other warriors to come and go at will as he continued his journey eastward. When the expedition reached Fort Cobb, Custer resorted to every means of diplomacy he could devise to induce the Indians to come into the reservation voluntarily. When he failed to get results by this method he sent an ultimatum, under the signature of General Sheridan, for them to come in, or else the two chieftians who were held as hostages would be killed. The Kiowas arrived pronto.

Custer then tried the same tactics on the Cheyennes, but with less success. He then sent a young Apache warrior, Iron Shirt, accompanied by Mo-nah-see-tah, a sister of Chief Black Kettle, in search of the Cheyenne and Arapaho camps to persuade these tribes to come into the reservation. Mo-nah-see-tah never returned, and Iron Shirt brought only flimsy excuses

⁷ George A. Custer, *Wild Life on the Plains*, p. 254.

from the Indian camps. General Sheridan then allowed Custer to select forty "picked men" and officers to go on a peaceful mission to the Indian camps on the western prairies. Custer located the Cheyenne camp on Mulberry Creek, a tributary of the Red River, and, after some negotiation, in which Monah-see-tah played an important part, the Cheyennes agreed to return with the expedition.

Again in the Spring of 1869 General Custer left Fort Cobb with a large force in search of small bands of Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and other Indians who were still roaming at large on the plains. He trailed along the northern edge of the Wichita Mountains until he struck the Salt Fork of the Red River. He followed up this stream for some distance and turned to Sweetwater Creek where he found the camp of the Indians. By means of strategy and diplomacy he succeeded in arresting three of the leading chieftans, after which he began negotiations with Chief Medicine Arrow of the Cheyennes. As a result of these negotiations Custer secured the release of a young Mrs. Morgan and a Miss White who had been taken captive by the Indians some months previously in Kansas. Custer demanded that the Indians return peacefully to the reservation which they agreed to do. This ended Custer's campaigns in the southwest.⁸

General Sheridan believed that his winter campaigns of 1868 had broken the resistance of the Indians. He reported in 1869 that, "A delegation of the chief fighting men of the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, twenty-one in all, arrived at this place (Fort Cobb) on foot, their animals not being able to carry them. They had ruled the village. They begged for peace, and for permission for their people to come in, asking no terms, but for a paper to protect them from the operations

⁸ George A. Custer, *Wild Life on the Plains*, p. 320. General Custer returned to Fort Cobb, and later to Fort Hays, Kansas, where his command was mustered out. For the next six years he waged campaigns against the Indians in the Northwest Territory where, in 1876, he met a violent death much similar to that of Major Elliott at the Washita.

of our troops while *en route*. They report the tribes in mourning for their losses, their people starving, their dogs all eaten up, and no buffalo".⁹ General Sheridan, however had much to learn about Indian warfare on the plains. The plains tribes remained at peace only a short time. They were soon again on the warpath committing their depredations all along the frontiers of Kansas and Texas.

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The years from 1870-1874 mark the final struggle between the Indians and the Anglo-Americans for the control of the lands of the Southwest. These were years of great trial and hardship for the Indians. Being accustomed to the chase they were restless on the reservations. Moreover, the Government's promise of food and clothing was not always fulfilled. The Indians felt a lack of security. The railroads were penetrating the western plains, and settlements were following the railroads. The great buffalo slaughter reached its peak during this period and the Indians saw millions of tons of meat rotting on the Texas plains.¹⁰ Swarms of locust swept over the prairies and destroyed much of the vegetation. This was accompanied by intense heat and blistering winds which added to the famine conditions.¹¹ The Indians were driven to desperation. Raids along the edge of the settlements, therefore, increased in frequency and intensity. Scores of people were massacred and taken captive, and thousands of horses and cattle were driven from the settlements.

In 1871 the Indians attacked a corn supply train at Salt Creek Prairie near Fort Richardson. Seven of the men with the wagon train were killed, their bodies horribly mutilated, and the wagons and supplies were burned. The Government was again forced into action. As a result Chiefs Satank, Satanta, and Big Tree of the Kiowas were soon arrested and

⁹ General Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections*, p. 150.

¹⁰ It has been estimated that from ten to twelve millions of buffalo were slaughtered for their hides during the decade from 1870-1880. George A. Simpson to L. F. Sheffy; R. (Dick) Bussell to L. F. Sheffy at Canadian, December 27, 1929.

¹¹ Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections*, pp. 156-166.

admitted that they took part in the massacre. Satank was shot while he was being returned to Jacksboro for trial. Satanta and Big Tree were given a civil trial at Jacksboro in one of the most famous trials in the judicial history of Texas. Both chieftains were convicted and sent to prison at Huntsville.

The United States soldiers and the Texas Rangers were soon engaged in a series of campaigns which were to follow the Indians to their last hiding places. In 1871 General Ranald S. Mackenzie led an expedition into Northwest Texas in pursuit of Chief Kicking Bird and his Kiowa band. He trapped Kicking Bird on Sweetwater Creek, in what is now Wheeler County, but allowed him to escape and return to Fort Sill on account of orders he received from General Grierson in command at the Fort.¹² This campaign, however, introduced Mackenzie to West Texas where he was to conduct campaigns against the Indians for the next few years.

In 1872 Mackenzie led a second expedition into the Texas Panhandle. He left Fort Richardson on June 14th and marched to the Fresh Water Fork of the Brazos where he established a supply camp. From this point Mackenzie scouted over much of the plains country, going as far west as Fort Sumner in New Mexico. On September 21st a scouting party, led by Lieutenant Boehm, came upon a village of the Mow-wis Comanches on McClellan Creek, a tributary of the North Fork of the Red River. The village was attacked and the Indians were routed. About fifty Indians were killed, 130 squaws and children were taken prisoners, 800 ponies were captured, and the village of 250 lodges was destroyed. However, the Indian warriors who had escaped returned after nightfall, recaptured their ponies,

¹² Captain Carter says the Government did not want a war with the Indians at this time and, therefore, sent orders for Mackenzie not to attack Kicking Bird under any circumstances. When Grierson received these orders from the "Indian ring" at Washington he sent them on to Mackenzie on Sweetwater Creek. The messenger arrived just about the time Mackenzie was ready to attack Kicking Bird. Mackenzie never quite forgave Grierson, says Captain Carter. See Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, pp. 123-124.

and sent the Tonk scouts who were guarding the ponies back to camp on foot.¹⁸ Mackenzie sent other scouting parties into various parts of the Panhandle Plains country, but they succeeded only in keeping the Indians on the move.

In 1872 General Mackenzie made another trip into the Texas Panhandle in search of the Quahada Comanches under Chief Quanah Parker. For centuries the Quahada Comanches had found shelter and security in the rough breaks country along the eastern edge of the Llano Estacado. This campaign was only partially successful. Mackenzie's men engaged the Indians in a running fight in the Blanco Canyon on October 10, 1872. Chief Quanah Parker and his warriors withdrew from the engagement after Mackenzie had lost one man. Mackenzie selected a group of his best men and followed the Indians out onto the plains near the head of Blanco Canyon in the present Crosby County. On the evening of October 12th, just as Mackenzie and his men were about to overtake the fleeing Indians, a cold blizzard came up and the trail was lost. By dawn of the following day the Indians had again found safe refuge in the fastnesses of the Tule and Palo Duro canyons. Mackenzie returned to Fort Richardson empty handed, but he had discovered the almost impregnable hiding places of the Comanches. While these expeditions did not succeed in capturing a large number of Indians, yet they did give Mackenzie and his men valuable experience in dealing with the nomads of the plains.

In 1873 General Mackenzie was transferred to the trans-Pecos country where the Indians were plundering and committing depredations. General Sherman, who was in charge of the military division of the Southwest, ordered Mackenzie to put a stop to this lawlessness. Mackenzie marched his forces to Fort Clark, near the Rio Grande, and, with this as a base, he crossed over into the State of Coahuila, Mexico. After an all

¹⁸ Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, p. 377 and following.

night ride through dangerous mountain passes, Mackenzie and his men in the early morning hours of May 8th made a bold attack upon the village of Rey Molina. This village, situated far back in the Santa Rosa Mountains, had for years served as a safe retreat for affiliated bands of Kickapoo, Potawatamie, Lipan, and Mescalero Apaches who would cross over the international boundary line, commit their depredations, and return safely to their hiding places. Mackenzie's daylight attack took the Indians completely by surprise and they fled in confusion. About fifty Indian chieftans were killed, 200 stolen horses were recaptured, and the village was burned. This expedition was one of several expeditions into the Rio Grande Valley to quiet the Indians along the border on both sides of the river.¹⁴

In 1874 General Mackenzie was given the task of subduing the Indians in the southern portion of the Texas Panhandle. The orders which he received on August 28, 1874 stated that:

The object of the proposed campaign against the hostile Cheyennes, Comanches, Kiowas, and others from the Fort Sill Reservation, is to punish them for recent depredations along the Kansas and Texas frontiers. . . . The country accessible to these hostile bands is very large, and affords innumerable hiding places for themselves and their families and herds, and it is not expected that the object of the campaign is to be accomplished in a day, unless by great and unexpected good fortune; but it is not proposed, however, to release efforts in the least, until the Indians are eventually found and punished, and made to subject themselves to such terms as the Government may impose upon them.¹⁵

General Mackenzie as a preliminary to his campaigns established his base of supplies at the Fresh Water Fork of the Brazos which had been used for the same purpose in his campaigns of 1872. On September 20, 1874, he moved his troops out of camp into the Blanco Canyon and on north into the

¹⁴ Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, p 462: J. Fred Rippy, *The United States and Mexico*, Chapters 17 and 18. Rippy says these border difficulties were settled by arbitration in 1879.

¹⁵ Brigadier General C. C. Augur, Fort Griffin (Texas), to General Robert S. Mackenzie, Fort Griffin, August 28, 1874, as quoted by Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, pp. 475-476.

rough Quitaque country. He came out on the plains just west of the present town of Quitaque where he engaged the Indians in a running fight on the prairies. Some fifteen Indian warriors were killed. He followed the Indians north into the Palo Duro Canyon where on September 28th the battle of the Palo Duro was fought at the junction of the Palo Duro and the Canyon Cita Blanco creeks. Mackenzie led his men down a dangerous Indian trail which almost tumbles into the canyon from the south wall. After several hours of hard fighting along the precipitous canyon walls the Indians were driven out of the canyons, their lodges were destroyed, fifty or sixty Indians were killed, and about 2000 horses were taken. These horses were driven back to the Middle Tule Canyon, a few miles east of where the town of Tulia now stands. Here General Mackenzie allowed the Tonk scouts to select a few of the best ponies, and then ordered the remaining horses to be killed to keep them from again falling into the hands of the Indians.¹⁶

Mackenzie's entrance into the Palo Duro, plus the fact that the United States soldiers and Texas Rangers were waging campaigns from almost every direction, seemed to break the morale of the Indians. They realized that further resistance was impossible. They began, therefore, their last trek from the West Texas plains to Fort Sill and other reservations where they were to begin to travel the white man's road.

By 1874 the buffalo hide hunters had shifted the center of their operations to the Llano Estacado. This struck into the very heart of the buffalo country of the Southern Plains. Con-

¹⁶ For a detailed description of this battle see Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, pp. 488-497; Col. Chas A. P. Hatfield's account of the battle coincides with that of Captain Carter. Published *Amarillo News Globe* August 18, 1935. Both men took part in the battle.

Mr. Bruce Gerdis of Tulia has made a careful study of these expeditions and the terrain on which they were fought. In regard to the battle in the Palo Duro he wrote: "I definitely located where the fight took place in 1922 . . . I piloted a bunch of Kiowa and Comanches, three of whom were in the fight, to the trail where the troops descended into the Canyon . . . and they readily identified the place. They showed me where the Comanches, Kiowas and Cheyennes had their camps." Bruce Gerdes, Tulia, Texas to W. G. Eustis, Denver, Colorado, August 31, 1936.

sequently, several Indian tribes who were discontented with their lot on the reservations went on the war path. In the early morning hours of June 27th they made an attack on the stockade at Adobe Walls on the Canadian River. During the fight the Indians made a desperate attempt to set fire to the buildings of the old stockade, but the twenty-eight hide hunters in the stockade were too well fortified. Nature itself seemed to decree disaster for the Indians. The terrain around the stockade was undermined with gopher holes, and the Indians' horses kept falling as they dashed to and from the stockade.¹⁷ When the battle was ended the hunters were still in possession of the Canadian Valley, while the Indians were filled with consternation and despair. This fight was the signal of revolt and renewed Indian depredations all along the southwestern frontier. The United States Government and the Texas legislature, therefore, were forced to take more decisive steps to subdue thoroughly the Indians and compel them to remain permanently on the reservations.

While General Mackenzie was harassing the Indians in the southern part of the Llano Estacado, General Nelson A. Miles was pressing them from the north. On August 14, 1874, General Miles left Fort Dodge, Kansas, with his command divided into three columns. He had eight troops of cavalry in two battalions, four companies of infantry, and a strong body of experienced trailers, scouts, and guides under Lieutenant Frank Baldwin. Among these scouts were friendly Delaware Indians and twenty-five expert riflemen who were thorough plainsmen, and who were schooled in the country Miles planned to invade.¹⁸

¹⁷ Chief Yellow Fish, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, June 27, 1939. Chief Yellow Fish was a participant in the battle at the Adobe Walls. See also Rupert N. Richardson, "The Comanche Indians at the Adobe Walls fight", *Panhandle Plains Historical Review*, IV, pp. 24-39.

¹⁸ The Miles campaign was part of a three-fold pincer movement into the Llano Estacado. General Price invaded the Panhandle from Fort Bascom, New Mexico, and General George P. Buell pressed in from Fort Sill in the Indian Territory. Bruce Gerdes, *Amarillo News Globe*, August 18, 1935.

General Miles scattered his three columns over as wide a territory as possible in order to concentrate the Indians before him. His command moved south by way of Camp Supply and crossed the Canadian River near Antelope Hills. On August 27th Miles struck an Indian trail at Sweetwater Creek. As the trail became fresher, he cut his mounted men loose from the wagon train and followed the trail into the Palo Duro Canyon near the present headquarters of the JA Ranch. Lieutenant Baldwin and his scouts were travelling some distance ahead of the main body of troops. Just as they entered the hills leading into the main branch of the Palo Duro Canyon they were attacked by a large band of Indians. Baldwin and his men held their ground until they were reinforced by Majors Compton and Biddle who came quickly to their rescue. The Indians were soon fleeing over the rugged hills, and they were followed for some twenty miles, says General Miles, "over the roughest ground that I had until that time ever seen men fight upon." Miles' men suffered intensely from heat and from the lack of water in travelling the fifty miles from Sweetwater Creek to the Palo Duro Canyon. He bivouaced his men for the night and the next day he chased the Indians out onto the plains of the Llano Estacado.¹⁹

¹⁹ A young officer, Lieutenant G. W. Baird, who was with the Miles expedition, addressed the following ode to the Red River after his disappointment at not finding water for the men and horses in its dry river bed:

TO RED RIVER, TEXAS
(Cir. 102 West, August 30, 1874)

O' name that art a lie,
Thou tell'st of purling springs,
Where sun-browned farmers dip
The draught, or surface kiss
With thirsting, thankful lip.

Thou tell'st of babbling brooks,
Where artless children play,
Along whose verdant banks
The happy lovers stray,
Of leaf-shaded pools
Where, at the close of day,
The home-returning kine
Their lazy footsteps stay.

General Miles, having gained confidence in his ability to cope with the Indians in the rough country of the Palo Duro, decided to bring up his wagon train and camp until he could replenish his supplies. He sent Captain Wyllys with a caravan of mules and a small escort to Camp Supply for provisions. Wyllys met some bull teams at Commission Creek loaded with supplies which were transferred to the mule teams. On their return Wyllys' train was attacked by a large band of Kiowa

Thou tell'st of rolling streams
 Upon whose bosom wide
 The wealth of cities floats
 And nations' navies ride,
 Between whose ample shores
 Rolls in the moon-dawn tide—
 And thou art—what?
 A name that is a lie.

II

Dust-stained, wearied and parched,
 Thirsting, ready to die,
 We ask for one cooling drop,
 Which sullenly thou dost deny,
 While, up from thy burning sands,
 As from venom'd serpent's eye,
 Comes sparkles of parched brine
 Which hope of aid deny—
 Art sure the good God made thee,
 Not they who his powers defy?

III

If in those Stygian realms—
 Which good men shun and bad men fear—
 Where grief fore-er o'erwhelms,
 And mothers look on children's woes without a tear,
 Where Dead-sea drops like thine alone are found,
 Within Creation's bound—
 If there one deeper, ghastlier pit there be
 Where, fitting comrades, ceaseless writhe the vilest vile;
 Those who have slain their babes unborn;
 Whose flitting ghosts, in terror, other murderers shun—
 Those who, in love's pure name, have wrought another's shame;
 Crime more doubly damned than poisoning eucharistic wine—
 Those who for paltry gain, have doubly armed our cruel foe—
 If Powers Infernal fitting prison find
 For monsters such as these—
 Thy name above its triply-barred door
 Forever burns in baleful, sulphurous fire
 O name that art a lie!

Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections*, pp. 169-170.

and Comanche Indians who had just left the reservation and had commenced hostilities. E. H. Fletcher, who was one of the teamsters escorting the mule caravan, gives the following account of the attack:

We could see the Indians following us at a distance practically all day. Just before the attack I saw a large Indian come out of one of the breaks and flash a mirror. This was the signal for the attack and the Indians came swarming down upon us. The teams were driven in two parallel lines so that they could form a corral on a moment's notice. This was accomplished and the rear teams closed up forming the back of the corral while the front was left open and breastworks were hastily thrown up. The soldiers in the outfit were deployed in the grass on the outside of the corral. The Indians charged repeatedly and at one time the soldiers commenced to give way. Then the major in command mounted his horse and rode around the men reassuring them and telling them to keep their places. This was done under tremendous fire from the Indians. Many mules were killed and at least one white man. It is not known how many Indians were killed, but the Indians kept this part of the expedition without water for about three days.²⁰

In the meantime General Miles, anxious to know what had happened to his supply train, dispatched Scouts Billy Dixon and Amos Chapman and four soldiers to Camp Supply. On September 12th as this party was approaching the Washita, in the southern part of what is now Hemphill County, they were attacked by a band of 125 Kiowas and Comanches. After four of the party had been wounded, one of them fatally, Dixon and his men took refuge in a buffalo wallow and began to throw up breastworks for defense. He and his men suffered intensely from thirst until a refreshing shower came and filled the wallow. The party quenched their thirst with water mixed

²⁰ E. H. Fletcher, Pampa, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, (date not given). Fletcher was a member of one of the Maine Batteries during the Civil War. After the war he came west and engaged in hunting buffalo. He was a teamster in the Miles Expedition in 1874. Fletcher hunted buffalo for a large outfit. On one expedition he killed 3700 buffalo. James Donley and J. W. McKinley were also teamsters in the Miles expeditions. All three of these men later settled in Hemphill County. Hobart became well acquainted with them, and from them he secured much information about the Miles Expedition, as well as many other historic incidents connected with the early history of the Texas Panhandle.

See also Miles, *Personal Recollections*, pp. 159-160; 175-176.

with their own blood. After spending the night in the buffalo wallow Dixon left the party and went in search of help. He had not gone far when he met up with a column of United States troops from New Mexico. These troops came to the relief of the party and the Indians abandoned the siege.²¹

During the autumn and early winter of 1874 General Miles waged campaigns over a wide area of the Southern Plains. His trails reached into the Indian Territory, Eastern New Mexico, and Southern Kansas. However, he centered his operations in the Texas Panhandle where the Indians were making their last stand against the onslaughts of the white man. During this time Lieutenant Baldwin and his men took part in no less than nine engagements with the Indians in this region. One of the most spectacular of these engagements was Baldwin's attack on the camp of Chief Gray Beard of the Cheyennes.

In the early part of September General Miles established camp on the North Fork of Red River. On the morning of September 8th he sent Lieutenant Baldwin with Troop D of the Sixth Cavalry and Company D of the Fifth Infantry to scout the country toward the north and east. At the head waters of McClellan Creek, in what is now Gray County, Baldwin came unexpectedly upon the camp of Chief Gray Beard and several bands of Cheyenne and Kiowa Indians. When the scouts reported to Baldwin that a large number of Indians were in front of them, less than a mile distant, on a creek at the foot of a general slope, he ordered the cavalry to "trot, gallop, and charge", and commanded the infantry to "double time."²² In making the charge the infantry got ahead of the cavalry, as the horses were about used up, and came upon the Indian camp before they saw it in a deep coulee. The Indians

²¹ Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections*, pp. 173-174; Mrs. Billy Dixon, *Life of Billy Dixon*, Chapter 11.

²² General W. C. Brown, Denver, Colorado, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, October 17, 1932. Hobart Letter Files. General Brown took part in the engagement.

swarmed out of the coulee for an attack. They were quickly driven off onto the plains. General Brown has the following to say about Lieutenant Baldwin's part in the engagement:

Riding just in front of the line, and with his trumpeters fairly splitting the frosty morning air with their shrill calls, the whole command yelling like demons, charged like a hurricane down the gentle grassy slope into and through the camp of the startled Indians, whose surprise was so complete that they fled like quail before a tempest.²³

Part of Baldwin's troops held the Indian warriors out on the plains while the remainder charged down into the canyon and took charge of the Indian camp. In the destruction of the camp one George W. James and four other soldiers came to a point where a number of buffalo robes were scattered about. One of the robes moved, and just as one of the soldiers raised his gun to shoot, James hit the barrel and it glanced upward. Under this robe two of the German children, who had been taken captive in Kansas a few months previous to this time, were held.²⁴

The Indian warriors in the meantime made a stand on the plains in order to give the squaws and children a chance to escape. Lieutenant Baldwin ordered the teamsters in the valley below to lighten their loads and bring up the howitzer at once. When the howitzer was put into action an unusual scene was enacted.²⁵ The first shell from the howitzer did not explode on account of a defective fuse, but the second shot exploded just above the Indians who made a spectacular scramble to get

²³ General W. C. Brown in *Army and Navy Register*, date not given. Hobart Letter Files.

²⁴ Grace E. Meredith, *Girl Captives of the Cheyennes*, pp. 17-23; General W. C. Brown, Denver, Colorado, to T. D. Hobart, October 17, 1932. The German family were on their way from Georgia to Colorado and were almost out of the Indian country when the parents were killed and the four children, all girls, were taken captive.

²⁵ E. H. Fletcher to T. D. Hobart. Date and place not given. When this order came Fletcher thought it would be a good time to get rid of a fifth wheel that had been tied on the rear of his wagon. He cut the wheel loose and it rolled down the hill for more than a half mile. Hobart Letter Files.

away. The scene was greatly exaggerated by one of those strange mirages of the plains.²⁶

Gray Beard's camp was destroyed and the Indians were driven far out onto the plains. A few days after this battle occurred General Miles demanded the surrender of Julia and Catherine German within forty-eight hours or else he would exterminate the tribe. The Cheyennes made a hurried trip to their camp in the Pecos country and returned shortly with their captives who were surrendered to Miles. The four German girls were then taken to one of Miles' camps on the Washita, in the southern part of Hemphill County, the present headquarters of the Hobart Ranch. They were given a few days rest and were later returned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where they made their permanent home.²⁷

The Battle of McClellan Creek was the last major engagement with the Indians in the Llano Estacado. After this battle Indian troubles shifted to the international borderline along the Rio Grande where they were to hold the spotlight until the end of the decade. In order to keep the Indians on the reservations and prevent further raids into Northwest Texas, the Commander of the Military Department in 1874 gave directions for the location of a cantonment on the North Fork of the Red River (Gray County). A site was selected and a military post was established February 3, 1875, by Troops B, C, E, and K, Sixth Cavalry, and Companies C, D, E, and I,

²⁶ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to General W. C. Brown, Denver, Colorado, January 22, 1932. Hobart secured his information from E. H. Fletcher. Years after this battle occurred Hobart found both the unexploded shell of the howitzer, and the wheel that was cut loose by Fletcher. Messrs. T. D. Hobart, Jesse Wynne, H. B. Lovett, and A. H. Doucette, all of Pampa, located the site of Gray Beard's camp on section 12, Block, b-2, in Gray County, "near the forks of Little McClellan Creek and North McClellan Creek. It is an ideal place for a winter camp, with plenty of timber, water and good protection for the winter. On this location Mr. Lovett states that he saw a number of abandoned tepee poles fifty years ago."

T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to General W. C. Brown, Denver, Colorado, August 24, 1933. Hobart Letter Files.

²⁷ Nelson A. Miles, *Personal Recollections*, pp. 176-179; John A. Cotten, Snyder, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, September 22, 1925; T. D. Hobart, Pampa, to *Dallas Morning News*, May 8, 1928.

Fifth Infantry, and designated Cantonment North Fork Red River. It was later decided to select a more suitable site for a cantonment, and a new site was established ten miles to the east on Sweetwater Creek. Cantonment North Fork Red River was abandoned and supplies and troops were removed to the cantonment on Sweetwater Creek where they arrived June 21, 1875. The designation of the latter post was changed to Fort Elliott, Texas, February 21, 1876.²⁸

Fort Elliott was the last fort to be established in West Texas. For the people of the Llano Estacado the fort became the sentinel and the symbol of protection for the white man for the next fifteen years. Indian depredations were at an end, but they had not failed to leave a lasting imprint in the minds of the settlers of this frontier region. After Fort Elliott was abandoned in 1890 people were easily excited by any kind of Indian rumors.

In November, 1890, an unusual episode occurred in the Texas Panhandle. Legend has it that some cowboys at a roundup in Collingsworth County decided late one evening to kill a beef. The usual noise around the cow camp and the clouds of dust raised by the stirring herds frightened a woman who was alone with her two small children in a nearby dugout. Being mindful of the Indian depredations in the Panhandle before Fort Elliott was built, she concluded immediately that the Indians had escaped from the reservations and were again on the war path. She rode horseback several miles to the home of a neighbor and gave the alarm that the Indians were coming. The news spread rapidly by grapevine and by telegraph from Memphis in Hall County. Within a day or two the people were fortified up at the county seats all the way from Hemphill County to Crosby County. When the Indians failed to appear the temporary forts were quickly abandoned and the incident

²⁸ Adjutant General, James F. McKinley, Washington, D. C., to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, November 10, 1933. Hobart Letter Files.

furnished merriment and laughter among the settlers for many years to come.²⁹

By 1890 there was much evidence that a new day was dawning in the West Texas plains. When General Nelson A. Miles made his expedition from Fort Dodge, Kansas, into the Texas Panhandle in 1874 his sixty six-mule teams and his twelve companies of cavalry beat a new trail deeply into the plains soil from Fort Dodge to Battle Creek, one of the tributaries of the Red River. This trail was designated as the Dodge Trail and it was used for years as a cattle trail and in hauling goods from Fort Dodge to Fort Elliott and to Mobeetie which was then in the heyday of its existence.

The Miles expedition, and other simultaneous expeditions, also mark the beginning of a new era in Anglo-American and Indian relationships. The Indians after 1876 retired permanently to the reservations in the Indian Territory and to the Territory of New Mexico and became citizens of the United States. Some members of these tribes continue to dwell in their tents and wigwams and bask in the memories of a Golden Age when West Texas had been for them a paradise on earth. Others threw aside the blanket and abandoned the tepee to travel the white man's road.

To the Anglo-Americans the Indians on the reservations have become an attraction and a curiosity. They are a constant reminder of a permanent and peculiar tinge of local color, romance, and barbarism which belong only to the South-western frontier. Time has mellowed somewhat the harsh relationships between the two races. They live peacefully side by side. But to the Indians the white man was an usurper who invaded his happy hunting grounds, destroyed his commissary, and drove him from his tribal domain. In this war to the death for possession of the West Texas plains the race was to the swiftest.

²⁹ For a splendid account of this incident see H. T. Burton, *A History of the JA Ranch*, pp. 63-67.

THE NEW YORK AND TEXAS COMPANY, LTD.

LONG BEFORE the Indians and the buffalo were removed from the public domain in West Texas, the Texas legislature began to make provision for the disposition of the state's unoccupied lands. In fact from the beginning of the republic, Texas adopted a liberal policy in disposing of its public lands. Land was the best legal tender the state had. Therefore, the republic, and later the state, used lands in payment of various kinds of obligations. Soldiers were paid for their services in land; lands were given as security for loans; lands were set aside for schools, and West Texas lands were granted to railroad companies for building railroads in the eastern part of the state. Land maps of West Texas are checkerboarded with grants such as, the Houston and Great Northern Railway Company, the International and Great Northern Railroad, the Texas and New Orleans Railway Company, and others.

On January 30, 1854, the Texas legislature passed an act "To encourage the Construction of Railroads in Texas by donations of land".¹ This act, together with the abundance of cheap, unoccupied lands in the western portion of the state, resulted in the formation of a number of railroad companies in Texas for the purpose of acquiring these lands. The Commissioner of the General Land Office, in his annual report in 1870, called special attention "to the large grants of land made to various railroad companies, and especially to the grants made to the Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad".² The Land Commissioner in 1874 reported that several thousand railroad surveys were in the office that had never been examined.³ In

¹ H. P. N. Gammel, *The Laws of Texas*, III, pp. 1455-1459.

² Report of the Land Commissioner, 1870. State Archives, Austin, Texas.

³ Report of Land Commissioner, 1874. State Archives, Austin.

1876-1877 four million acres were made subject to location by railroad companies.⁴

In the decade following the Civil War the cheap West Texas lands offered unlimited opportunities for eastern and foreign capital. Now that the buffalo and Indians were being removed from the vast public domain of Texas, this region made an attractive place for safe and profitable investments. Moreover, the whole Southwest furnished an outlet for the rapidly increasing population in the North and East, and the Anglo-American advance to this last American frontier was soon to begin. "Texas is a land of possibilities", declared the *Austin Daily Journal* in 1871. "The country is remarkably free from debt, has a good supply of hard cash, land is plentiful and cheap, immigrants are pouring in, and capitalists are looking upon it as an eminently profitable place for investment. Once that our political situation is settled into stable and progressive Republicanism, we shall be able to enter upon a new course of prosperity."⁵

In 1871 The Texas Land and Immigration Company was incorporated by the State of Texas "To promote immigration into Texas, to facilitate the sale and purchase and settlement of lands by immigration, and to introduce laborers, skilled operators and capital into the State."⁶ In the same year "The European and Texan Immigration Association" was formed. On May 23, 1871, the Texas legislature passed an act which set up the organization of this association. The act provided for a Superintendent of Immigration whose duties were "to take steps for the proper encouragement of immigration, and for the protection of immigrants, especially in the procurement of their transportation from the coast into the interior; in the guarding of them against fraud, chicanery and speculation in

⁴ Report of Land Commissioner, 1877, State Archives, Austin.

⁵ *The Austin Daily Journal*, March 23, 1871. State Archives, Austin.

⁶ This company was formed by T. B. Reynolds, Thomas Kearney, W. W. Phelps, and Ira H. Evans and their associates. Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VII, 152-153.

their temporary location in proper and reasonable places of board and lodging on their arrival; and in making all such regulations and provisions as may be in any manner necessary and conducive to their welfare." The superintendent was also required to publish pamphlets "in one or two of the principal languages of Europe" giving correct information of the advantages of the State to immigrants.⁷

The Southwestern Immigration Company, with headquarters at Austin, published in 1881 a lengthy prospectus entitled, *Texas: Her Resources and Capabilities*. This prospectus proclaimed that "the State of Texas offers inducements to immigrants which cannot be surpassed in many respects, and are rarely equalled by any other country on this continent. These comprise excellence of climate, soil and water, agricultural, grazing and commercial advantages, and educational facilities; and in addition to all these cheap lands."⁸

In 1870-1871 the Texas legislature was controlled by the carpetbaggers who were anxious to take advantage of the splendid opportunities that the virgin lands of West Texas offered. Therefore, a period of speculation and fraudulent land legislation in West Texas lands was begun which by the end of the decade had reached almost gigantic proportions. The report of the Board for the Investigation of Land Frauds made to the Governor January 3, 1884, referred 750,000 acres to the Attorney-General for suit to recover lands that had been acquired by evasion and violation of the Acts of 1879 and 1881. Much of this land, the Board reported, had been acquired by agents of non-resident speculators and foreign corporations.⁹

One of the most notable examples of fraud and chicanery connected with West Texas land legislation was a bill introduced in the Texas House of Representatives in 1871, "To

⁷ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VI, 1463-1464; 1029-1030.

⁸ *Texas: Her Resources and Capabilities*, p. 7.

⁹ Report of the Board for the Investigation of Land Frauds, January 3, 1884. State Archives Austin.

encourage the Speedy Construction of a Railroad Through the State of Texas to the Pacific Ocean." This bill provided that \$6,000,000 worth of bonds be issued to the Southern Pacific Railroad Company and the Southern Transcontinental Railroad Company, provided the two companies would agree upon a point of junction of the two roads west of the longitude of the eastern boundary of Shackelford County, and between the thirty-second and thirty-third parallels of north latitude. The bonds were payable in thirty years at the rate of eight percent per annum. The act provided also that whenever the state legislature had the power to do so under the constitution, it could substitute lands from the public domain to each of these companies in lieu of the bonds if it so desired. The further provision was made in the act that when the Southern Pacific Railroad Company and the Transcontinental Railroad Company consolidated with the Texas and Pacific Railroad, "all the rights, benefits, and privileges granted and intended to be secured by this act to the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, and the Transcontinental Railway Company, shall pass to and vest in the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company, a corporation created by and under the laws of the United States by an act of Congress approved March third A.D. one thousand eight hundred seventy-one".¹⁰

The advocates of the bill argued that it would greatly enhance the value of the public domain, develop the vast mineral, agricultural, and stock raising resources of the state, furnish facile communication between the eastern and western boundaries, secure transportation for immigrants to the western portion of the state, and give protection and security to the frontier.¹¹

The Honorable Ira H. Evans, Speaker of the House, that same Evans who later brought Hobart to Texas, left his chair

¹⁰ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VI, 1623-1628.

¹¹ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VI, 1623-1628; *The Austin Daily Journal*, April 6, 1871.

to make a speech against the bill. He pronounced the scheme a fraud, and declared that it was an attempt on the part of these railroad companies to unload their debt on the state. He contended that the Southern Continental Railroad Company was incorporated with the idea that it would succeed to all the rights of the Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Company, which had raised several million dollars in France for the construction of its road, but did not have a single mile of railroad under its control in Texas. "If this scheme shall succeed", he continued, "a precedent will have been established which will bring down upon Texas the horde of plunderers who, having robbed the state of millions and plunged it into bankruptcy, will look to this great Empire State as affording the most profitable field in which to continue their nefarious operations."¹²

Despite the opposition of the retrenchers the bill was passed. It was vetoed by Governor Edmund J. Davis, but was passed again over his veto and became a law. The millions of acres of unoccupied lands in West Texas were too rich a prize for corrupt lobbyists, and the policy of appropriating lands from the State's public domain was continued until 32,000,000 acres had been granted for building railroads. In addition to this the *Frontier Echo* in 1875 declared that money subsidies to railroads in Texas amounted to \$12,000,000.¹³

In the early 1880's large land corporations entered the field of investments in West Texas lands, and with this the first stage in the colonization of West Texas was begun. Land corporations reversed the process of colonization in Texas. In the early nineteenth century the work of colonization in Texas was carried on chiefly by the empresarios. These contractors were granted large tracts of land which were sold to settlers at a nominal price, and the funds raised from the sale of these

¹² For the entire speech see, Texas Collection, Library of the University of Texas, Austin.

¹³ Bascom Giles, *History and Disposition of the Texas Public Domain*, published by the General Land Office, Austin, Texas, 1942. *Frontier Echo*, Jacksboro, Texas, December 10, 1875. Texas Collection, University of Texas Library.

lands were used for the development of the colonies. The empresarios were remunerated for their efforts by securing title to large tracts of land within the colony.

Colonization in West Texas came at a later period and under different conditions. West Texas was colonized after the Civil War when big business played an important part in the occupation of the western frontier. The empresario in East Texas had its counterpart in the corporation in West Texas. Under the empresario system colonizer and his colonists came to Texas together, settled simultaneously, and developed the colony by cooperative effort. In West Texas the corporations acquired title to large tracts of land, located the lands and determined their boundaries, made as much improvements on the lands as possible, enhanced their value, and then induced the settlers to come. The corporations parceled out their lands to settlers in small tracts at a nominal price and extended the terms of payment over a period of from three to seven years, bearing interest usually at the rate of eight percent per annum. In West Texas, therefore, the corporations preceded and paved the way for the settlers.

One of the first and one of the largest land corporations formed in the Eighties for the purpose of investing in West Texas lands was the New York & Texas Land Company, Ltd. This company stemmed from two defunct railroad companies—the International and Great Northern and the Houston and Great Northern railway companies. The New York and Texas Land Company, however, was a direct successor to the Texas Land Company which had been formed in 1874 as a result of the merger of the two defunct railroad companies. This merger was approved by legislative act on March 10, 1875, which was entitled, "An Act for the *Relief* of the International Railroad Company."¹⁴ But even after this act of relief was passed,

¹⁴ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VIII, 659-663. For merger agreement see File No. 389, General Land Office, Austin, Texas,

the railroad company was either unable or unwilling to build railroads without further subsidy from the state.

As a result of this impasse private enterprise took over. On December 10, 1879, the International and Great Northern Railroad deeded to John S. Kennedy, Samuel Thorne, and William Walter Phelps, all of New York State, 3,049,430 acres of Texas lands for a consideration of \$4,628,400.¹⁵ William Walter Phelps acquired a controlling interest in these lands and the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited, was formed. By the end of the nineteenth century the Company had acquired more than five million acres of land in Texas extending from the Texas Panhandle to the Gulf of Mexico. At the time these lands were acquired they had neither been located nor surveyed. The first headquarters of the Company were established at Palestine, Texas, in 1880 but they were removed to Austin in 1885 on account of the large number of transactions with the State. It was at Palestine that the work of locating, classifying, and surveying the Company's lands was begun.¹⁶

Major Ira H. Evans was made president of the New York and Texas Land Company when it was organized and he remained head of the organization until it was liquidated in 1918.¹⁷ Evans came to Texas from Vermont with the carpet-baggers. For many years he was prominent in business and political affairs in Texas. He was one of the leaders in the formation of the Texas Land and Immigration Company in 1871.¹⁸ He was a member of the Texas legislature, and was

¹⁵ See Deed of Conveyance, File No. 438, General Land Office, Austin, Texas. These lands were located in Anderson, Atascosa, Cherokee, Colorado, Fort Bend, Free-stone, Galveston, Guadalupe, Harris, Henderson, Houston, Jackson, Leon, Liberty, Matagorda, Milam, Montgomery, Newton, Nacogdoches, Orange, Parker, Polk, San Jacinto, Trinity, Tyler, Walker, Wharton, Williamson, Carson, Gray, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Randall, Roberts, Cottle, Crosby, Dickens, King, Motley, Crockett, Dimmitt, Encinal, Frio, Kennedy, Lasalle, Maverick, Pecos, Uvalde, Webb, and Zavalla counties.

¹⁶ E. H. Homeyer, Austin, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, April 1, 1937.

W. L. Evans, San Antonio, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 2, 1937.

T. D. Hobart, Pampa Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, June 6, 1934.

¹⁷ W. L. Stark, Austin, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 5, 1942.

¹⁸ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VII, 152.

elected Speaker of the House in 1870. He was deposed as Speaker in 1871 because he was opposed to the majority who wished to postpone the election of state officers and thus extend the Republican regime in Texas for a longer period. Evans, together with E. P. Wilmot, John H. Childs, and one Mr. Hirshfeld founded the Austin National Bank. Major Evans came of sturdy stock. His father died at the age of ninety-five when he fell out of a tree he was pruning. The Major was small in stature, but he was well proportioned. He stood at five feet seven, weighed about one hundred fifty pounds, was bald and wore some beard. "He was honest, efficient, able, and was faithful to every trust that was imposed upon him. Millions of dollars passed through his hands, and no account of his was ever questioned," said W. G. Franklin who was an employee of the New York Company for twenty years.¹⁹ As President of the New York and Texas Land Company, Evans came to have a wide and thorough knowledge of Texas lands, and his Company was one of the leading corporations in preparing the way for the colonization of West Texas lands.

Evans gathered about him a group of capable and well trained young men as assistants. Among these were: E. A. Giraud who was Chief Clerk of the New York and Texas Land Company. Giraud started with the Company as a young man. He inherited the profession of civil engineering, his father having been a surveyor in Bexar County. The son took up the work of his father and surveyed much of the land of the New York and Texas Land Company. Giraud was educated in the public schools of San Antonio. "He was as good a title lawyer as there was in Texas, and was one of the most honorable men I have ever known," declared W. L. Stark, one of Giraud's contemporaries, who was long a prominent and influential

¹⁹ W. L. Evans, San Antonio, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 2, 1937; W. G. Franklin, Austin, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 5, 1942.

citizen of Austin. Other assistants were, W. G. Franklin, Phil G. Omohundro, E. H. Homeyer, and T. D. Hobart.

Timothy Dwight Hobart, a cousin of Evans, arrived in Palestine, fresh from Vermont, November 8, 1882. He began at once his employment with the New York and Texas Land Company with which he was to remain for twenty years—years that were to see the borderline of settlement pushed to the western confines of the state, and on into New Mexico and Arizona. Hobart's first assignment with the Company was as Assistant Town Lot Agent under E. A. Giraud. "Our first trip together," wrote Hobart, "was to the town of Troupe. Soon after our arrival at Troupe, and while we were sitting in front of the hotel, some men came by carrying a coffin. My companion inquired who the box was for, and was informed that it was for one Flave Childress, who was shot the night before. We next called for a citizen of the town with whom we had some business, and were informed that he was attending an inquest over the remains of a colored gentleman who had just met a violent death. I asked my companion if this average was kept up at all the places he visited."

In July, 1883, Hobart was sent with a surveying party under E. A. Giraud to the Pecos country to locate and survey a portion of the Company's lands. It was on this trip that the observing young Vermonter got his first introduction to the wilds of West Texas. To Hobart this trip was an adventure, and he was greatly impressed with the new country. It was here that he killed his first rattlesnake, trudged over the far-reaching Pecos prairies, climbed over the crags and peaks of the Pecos River, and swam in its muddy waters, "deep and swift and so thoroughly charged with red sediment that a man's body could not be seen an inch under the surface." Everything in this wide, open country had an attraction for the young Vermonter. The country fascinated him. He became greatly interested in its plant life and its wild life. The

quaint and straggling villages were of peculiar interest to him. He was intrigued with the western ways of life. He records in his writings a professional sign in the little town of Castroville which impressed him and which read as follows: "Shoe horses, cut hair, and pull teeth."

It was a far cry from the beautiful forested hills of Vermont to the parched and unsettled plains of the Southwest; but Hobart as a boy had dreamed for years of adventure, and now he was actually exploring new lands and discovering a new world. He witnessed scenes of Indian massacres and saw old Fort Lancaster "long since abandoned, standing in the midst of a lonely wilderness. I shall never forget the weird appearance of that old abandoned fort as we passed it in the early morning hours, with the chimneys of the old building projecting through the fog" he wrote years afterwards.²⁰

In 1884 and again in 1885 Hobart accompanied surveying parties into the Pecos country where they located and surveyed thousands of acres of the Company's lands. While on these trips Hobart resumed the study of calculus which he found to be helpful to him in his work on the frontier. In fact the work in the Pecos region during the years from 1882 to 1885 proved to be valuable training for the young Vermonter. He gained a first hand knowledge of the surveying business; he became a student of Texas lands; he began to analyze Texas soils; he studied carefully climatic conditions; and he began to record all observable changes in natural phenomena. In short these three years prepared Hobart for a career that he was to follow for the next fifty years—the location, settlement, and development of West Texas lands.

After his return from the Pecos country Hobart was assigned to the task of subdividing a league of the New York Company's lands located in Brazoria County. "That was one of the

²⁰ For an interesting first hand account of Hobart's work in the Pecos country see, T. D. Hobart, "Surveying Experiences of a Vermonter in Texas", *The Vermonter*, Volume XXXIV, 1929, pp. 67-70.

toughest little jobs I ever undertook," he wrote later, "drinking Brazos water, fighting mosquitoes day and night, and picking up a bunch of niggers that, for the most part were not very efficient, and finally getting poisoned with poison oak." When this task was completed Hobart's apprenticeship was at an end. He was now ready to take charge of a large subdivision of the Company's lands. In 1886 he was put in charge of more than a million acres of land in the Texas Panhandle.

Hobart arrived at Mobeetie, then a thriving frontier village in Wheeler County, in September, 1886, after a two hundred mile journey by stage coach from the town of Harrold in Wilbarger County, which was at that time the terminus of the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad. He established headquarters at once and began to acquaint himself with the problems connected with his new assignment. Hobart was by nature reserved and retiring, but he was amiable in disposition and made friends easily. While at Mobeetie he met many people who were to become his life long friends and associates. Among these were Judge Frank Willis, the first District Judge of the Texas Panhandle; J. N. Browning, who became Lieutenant Governor; Temple Houston, youngest son of the President of the Texas Republic; Captain G. W. Arrington, a famous Texas Ranger; C. O. Ostrom, who became Hobart's assistant; Col. Charles Goodnight, noted scout and cattleman; W. H. Grigsby, Uncle Johnnie Long, Mark Huselby, N. F. Locke, W. C. Polk, H. B. Spiller, Jesse Wynne, and many others. Mobeetie was not without its unique characters in those days: among them was W. H. Woodman, "one of the most peculiar characters any country ever produced. A man who claimed to be an Englishman by birth, a Virginian by raising, and a Texan by the grace of God." These were a few of the pioneer settlers who, with Hobart and others, began the work of transforming this remote Texas frontier from a wilderness into a prosperous commonwealth.

Hobart immediately became imbued with the spirit of the West and entered upon his work with his usual energy, optimism, and enthusiasm. From the beginning he visioned the Southwest as a land of prosperous stock farmers, but he realized that changes had to be made gradually and in their natural order of development. Land boundaries had to be determined and their limits had to be recognized; free and haphazard methods had to give way to organization and order; a new concept of the social and economic order had to be developed and established; new cultural foundations had to be laid and the old customs and traditions had to be swept away. The time had come in West Texas when intelligent leadership and direction had to be given to institutional development. Such changes require time and they demand leaders who have patience, tact, diplomacy, and a high order of intelligence.

Hobart came to Texas a "Vermont Yankee," representing a large corporation whose lands had been appropriated and used for many years as a part of the open free range. His first task, therefore, was to set up new rules and regulations governing these lands, create land values, and see to it that such regulations and values were recognized. There were many obstacles that stood in his way. His Company's lands were yet unfenced; the United States Government was preparing to open to settlers the lands lying adjacent to the Texas Panhandle in the Indian Territory; the Territory of New Mexico was still an open free range; the State of Texas had reserved every alternate section of land in a large part of the public domain for the public schools; and these lands were soon to be put on the market at \$1.00 per acre.

Evans entered a protest against the State's proposed policy, declaring that such a policy would destroy land values in West Texas. Hobart reasoned differently. "You can't sell land in competition with the State," he wrote Evans, "but I think it would be to your interest if the state were to give away its

lands, if it would require people to improve them. A man who buys four sections will either buy more land or he will sell to somebody who will buy more land." Hobart believed that the lowering of the price on state lands would attract settlers, and that this would ultimately enhance the value of all Panhandle lands. Events proved later that he was right. Time, however, was essential to the realization of his objective. Therefore, he moved cautiously but with confidence.

Hobart's first task in the Texas Panhandle was to survey the lands belonging to his Company. He organized a surveying party which was put in charge of Phil G. Omohundro.²¹ Major George S. Storrs, a Confederate Veteran who had commanded a battery at the Battle of Kenesaw Mountain, was appointed by the State Land Commissioner to represent the state in establishing titles to lands after the boundary lines had been determined. Major Storrs was a unique character who had an interesting career before coming to Texas. He was a classmate of Admiral Dewey at Annapolis. He and Dewey entered the Naval Academy on the same day, graduated at the same time (1855), and on the same day were ordered to the U. S. Frigate Wabash, and took a two years' cruise together on the Mediterranean.²² Storrs, however, was to play an entirely different role in later life from that of Admiral Dewey. It was in 1898 that Admiral Dewey steamed into the harbor at Manila Bay and claimed the Philippine Islands for the United States. During this same period Major Storrs represented the State of Texas in establishing boundaries and titles to hundreds of thousands of acres of Texas lands. Major Storrs was a frequent addict of the bottle and often, after he had imbibed too freely, he would wax eloquent and even become rabid, in his

²¹ Phil G. Omohundro was a man of considerable wit and humor. He holds the distinction of organizing one of the first secret orders in the Texas Panhandle. This order was known as "The Ancient Order of United Hickabites." He was a graduate of the Virginia Military School. He came to Mobeetie in 1885.

²² T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Major Ira H. Evans, Austin, March 31, 1898. Hobart Letter Files. Hobart and Admiral Dewey were distant cousins.

attempts to convince Hobart of the justice of the Southern cause. Hobart, in his kind and gentle manner, would repulse these forensic onslaughts with his brilliant darts of wit and humor. The war veteran would always surrender, but not without contending that Hobart was "an exceptional Yankee." Storrs and Omohundro were indispensable to Hobart in locating and determining the boundaries of the New York and Texas Company's lands in the Texas Panhandle.

Hobart travelled over the Texas Panhandle in a buckboard supervising the work of his surveying crew, adjusting differences over boundaries, and familiarizing himself with every detail of his Company's lands. He studied these lands so thoroughly that it was said he could give the location, describe the terrain, the soil conditions, and discuss the availability of water on lands in any locality where he had worked without referring to maps or records of any kind.

The Hobart-Storrs surveys were the first legally recognized surveys that were made on the New York Company's lands in the Panhandle. The earliest surveys had been made by William Nelson in 1873, but only a few corners had been established. "Nelson was supposed to have surveyed each section," said Hobart,²³ "but he did most of the work in his office as a matter of fact. It was fortunate that he did, because if he had put in a lot of corners at that time they would have bothered us later when the lands were re-surveyed."

When Hobart began the work of surveying in the Texas Panhandle a number of settlements had already been made. The settlements were made according to the Nelson surveys. The Hobart surveys revealed that the Nelson surveys were incorrect, and, as a result, it was found that many settlers were located on lands which belonged to the New York and Texas Land Company. Much opposition, therefore, to the new surveys was encountered, and Hobart had great difficulty in

²³ T. D. Hobart to L. F. Sheffy, June 6, 1934.

making satisfactory adjustments of boundary lines. However, he made an enviable record in the settlement of these boundary disputes. Within a period of three years all differences had been arranged satisfactorily without a single lawsuit. "I worked on the principle that everybody wanted to do the right thing, and I tried to show the people that my Company did not want to take advantage of their mistakes," Hobart wrote years afterwards.

The land on which Fort Elliott was located had been leased by the United States Government from the New York and Texas Land Company with the option of purchase. When the Hobart surveys were made it was found that the fort was located on section 55, Blk. A-5, Wheeler County, which did not belong to the Company. Moreover, the survey showed that section 45, Blk A-5, was patented in the name of F. M. Patton, George Mathews, and Judge Frank Willis. Henry Fleming was also located on one of the four sections that had been leased by the Government. In addition to these complications, the town of Mobeetie was located on the Company's land.

Hobart attempted to make an adjustment of boundaries with the Government through Major Upham who was in charge at Fort Elliott. After making two visits he found the Major cool and non-communicative. Hobart then got in touch with Major Phelps who was a member of Congress from New Jersey, and in short order Phelps arranged the matter satisfactorily with Mr. Endicott, Secretary of War, in 1887. By making an exchange of lands, boundary lines with the town of Mobeetie and all other citizens involved were finally made satisfactory to all parties concerned.²⁴

The adjustment of these differences established for Hobart a reputation for honest and fair dealing that became widely known and extended into many states in future years. In later

²⁴ T. D. Hobart to L. F. Sheffy, June 6, 1934.

years he became the counselor and confidant of many people in the middle western and eastern states who made investments in Texas lands. The thousands of letters in the Hobart files from scores of people in the North and East who sought his advice about the price of land, the advisability of purchase or sale, rentals, character of the soil, water supply, and climate give ample evidence that Hobart's reputation as a land man was almost nation wide. He was a prolific letter writer, and when necessary he went into details in his attempt to give his clients complete and correct information.

When Hobart came to the Panhandle in 1886, West Texas was passing through its first period of transition. The Texas and Pacific Railroad was completed in 1881 connecting Fort Worth and El Paso. In June, 1888, the last spike was driven on the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad²⁵ connecting those two cities. In 1887 the Southern Kansas Railway entered the Texas Panhandle from the north, and before the end of the century this road was connected with Southern Pacific at El Paso. Eastern and foreign capital was also being invested on a large scale in lands and cattle ranches in the western part of the state. These investments were greatly stimulated by the introduction of windmills and barbed wire in the Southern plains.

Hobart was cognizant of all these changes, and he was aware of the significance of the new developments. They afforded him splendid opportunities for the improvement of the New York Company's lands. These lands not only had to be located and surveyed, but they also had to be put in use, to the end that their values would be enhanced and they would bring financial returns to the Company. Hobart devised a plan of fencing and leasing land to large cattle concerns for grazing purposes, and using the first year's rentals for improvement of the properties. When this plan was suggested to Evans he did

²⁵ The *Tascosa Pioneer*, June 2, 1888. Files Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas.

not think it was practical, but he allowed Hobart to proceed with his program. Accordingly Ben and Sebe Merry²⁶ were put in the Palo Duro Canyon to protect the timber on the Company's lands, and to cut posts for fencing the uplands. This timber preserve supplied hundreds of thousands of posts for the New York Company, and aided greatly in the solution of one of Hobart's most difficult problems—fencing.

Land enclosures called for an increased water supply. This Hobart provided by building dams for impounding water during the rainy seasons. These reservoirs made much more water available on the Company's lands, but they were not sufficient to provide water at all times. Hobart, therefore, joined with other large companies in the great windmill experiment on the plains. By 1900 forty-one wells had been drilled on the Company's lands.²⁷ The windmill experiment was pronounced a success, and another important step had been made in preparing the way for settlers in this region.

The Hobart letters during the closing years of the nineteenth century reveal several significant changes. In the first place practically all of the Company's lands were enclosed at the end of the century, and sufficient water for stock purposes had been provided. Another noticeable change was that the size of land tracts offered for sale or lease were considerably reduced. These tracts ranged in size from 20,000 to 125,000 acres. The largest tracts were the Sam Lazarus Pasture in Childress and Collingsworth counties consisting of 100,000 acres; the

²⁶ The Merry Brothers were unique characters, but the Panhandle never had more substantial citizens than they. They measured almost seven feet in stature; they were bachelors, they lived for years in a dugout in the Palo Duro Canyon where they kept a pet snake to keep the mice away. They rendered valuable service to Hobart's Company in protecting its timber in the Palo Duro, and they cut thousands of posts for the Company for which they received from seven to nine cents per post. In August, 1898, the following notice appeared in Editor B. Roy Houghton's *Canyon City Battleship* and H. H. Brooks', *Amarillo Champion*: "All persons desiring wood for fuel or posts are hereby notified that same can be procured by seeing or addressing S. P. and B. F. Merry at Canyon City, Texas. Any unauthorized parties detected in trespassing or removing timber from Block 6, I & G N R R Co., east of Canyon City, will be vigorously prosecuted." Hobart Letter Files.

²⁷ George Tyng, Pampa, to A. Turner, Amarillo, June 17, 1902. Hobart Letter Files.

U-U Nick Eaton Range of 88,000 acres, and the North Fork Pasture of 190,000 acres in Wheeler County; the 85,000-acre Red Deer Pasture in Roberts County; and a 125,000-acre tract south of Amarillo in Randall County which was leased for several years to the Cedar Valley Land and Cattle Company. T There were a number of pastures ranging in size from 20,000 to 50,000 acres. While these lands were leasing for an average of about four cents per acre, it was becoming more and more difficult to make leases, especially on the larger tracts. When leases were made the lands were subject to sale. More attention was being paid to the sale than to the leasing of lands. A rapidly increasing number of sales in small tracts were being made to settlers. The price ranged from \$1.75 to \$3.00 per acre with one-third or one-fifth down, and the balance in equal annual payments extending over a period of from three to five years.

During the years from 1895 to 1900 the Hobart letters show that quite a number of prospectors were coming into the country. Childress and Collingsworth counties were settling up rapidly, Hobart wrote, "apparently with a good class of people. . . . Some thirty settlers have come into Collingsworth County during the past few months. . . . Quite a number of settlers have passed through here (Mobeetie) from Oklahoma, but we have been unable to stop them so far." The lease and sale of lands were made in tracts "to suit the purchaser." During the last years of the century also a large number of cattle concerns closed out, and it became more and more difficult to make leases or to make the lessees pay for improvements. On June 12, 1897, Hobart wrote Evans that he hesitated to provide water on certain surveys, though he realized it was needed, on account of the cost which would "amount to more than the first year's rental to make the necessary improvements. It will probably cost in the neighborhood of \$175 to construct a tank and about \$200 to bore and

case a well." On February 12, 1898, Hobart wrote Evans that he could not lease land in Roberts County unless the Company would guarantee an ample supply of water. Lessees would no longer put down wells, he said, on account of the expense and uncertainty of getting water. "You are aware that I have to shape our leases very often to accommodate the changes that are being made in the state school lands, and such has been the case here, which I think has resulted to our advantage. . . . It seems to me that it would be a good plan to quietly go to work and contract tanks in certain localities where water is scarce, and have lessees divide the cost with us if possible. It seems to me that we could push this work with advantage in a number of localities. It frequently takes some months to have a tank thoroughly packed and filled with water, and in view of the possible reduction of rentals on State lands if we could manage to control the water largely I think it would give us quite an advantage."

By the beginning of the twentieth century hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of improvements had been put on the New York and Texas Company's Panhandle lands, and a large portion of these lands had been sold to ranchmen and settlers. Hobart had twenty years of valuable experience written on the ledger books in the handling of West Texas lands. In 1902 he wrote the following brief summary of his conclusions as a result of his twenty years of work with the New York Company:

My experience with these people in the land business extends over a period of nearly twenty years, covering different portions of the State of Texas, but by far the greater part of the time has been spent in the Panhandle country and I consider this the best *stock-farming country* (Italics are mine) that I know of. Good forage crops are raised nearly every year, such as Sorghum, Kaffir-corn, millet, etc., and in many instances good crops of wheat and oats. Under improved methods of cultivation fair crops of corn have been raised. I consider the grass crop a sure one, though of course it varies to some extent in quantity and quality, different years. Different kinds of

fruits—peaches, cherries, apples, etc., and various garden products are raised successfully.

The quality of the land varies greatly in different localities. On the plains in Gray and Roberts Counties, you can find section after section of smooth land, nearly all of which will be suitable for cultivation and the soil of great fertility. Plenty of good water is secured on the land in the localities last mentioned, but of greater depth, of course, than in the valleys. In the valleys and along the running streams there are occasional groves of timber—cottonwood and hackberry.²⁸

When the above letter was written Hobart's work with the New York and Texas Company, Limited was almost at an end. In 1883 when he began his employment with the Company he assisted in checking out almost one thousand square miles—631,000 acres—of the Company's lands to the Francklyn Land and Cattle Company, an English corporation. This conveyance "made quite an impression" on the young Vermonter, but little did he dream that twenty years later he would be assigned the task of colonizing these lands. In January, 1903, Hobart resigned his position with the New York and Texas Land Company to accept a similar position with the White Deer Lands. These lands were the same tract that had been conveyed to the Francklyn Land and Cattle Company in 1883. It was on this one-thousand square mile tract of land, located in Carson, Gray, Hutchinson, and Roberts counties that Hobart had his first opportunity to carry his colonization plans to completion.

²⁸ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to C. C. Norman, Tamalco, Ill., January 29, 1902. Hobart Letter Files.

LAND POLICY FOR TEXAS' PUBLIC DOMAIN

THE INAUGURATION of Richard Coke as Governor of Texas on January 15, 1874, brought an end to the Carpetbag rule in Texas, and opened a new era in the history of the state. As has been shown in the previous chapter, the vast public domain in West Texas had already begun to attract the attention of large railroad corporations. The earliest cattlemen did not take time to make investments in lands in the western portion of the state. They followed immediately the departing buffalo herds, occupied the western lands, and used them for grazing purposes without paying any returns to the state. The widely heralded huge profits made in the cattle business on the free ranges of West Texas also attracted capital on a large scale from the North and East, and from foreign countries. These eastern and foreign corporations invested millions of dollars in both land and cattle, and entered the scramble for the ownership and control of West Texas lands.

These conditions set the stage for one of the greatest periods of fraud and speculation in lands that has ever been witnessed in the history of the American frontier. This era of speculation was put in motion by the formation of a large number of railroad companies, and by the Land Act of July, 1879. This act provided for the sale of the alternate sections of school lands in organized counties which railroad companies were required to set apart in locating and surveying their lands. The school lands were in "no case to be valued at less than one dollar per acre", one-tenth of the purchase price to be paid within ninety days after filing application for such lands, and the balance in ten years. No person was allowed to purchase more than 640 acres of "arable land" nor more than three sections of pasture lands. According to the act, all sales were supervised by the County

Surveyor and the Commissioners Court in the county in which the lands applied for were located.¹

This act precipitated a contest which was to have far-reaching effects on political and economic developments in West Texas. The contest was two-fold: it was a struggle between East Texas politicians and West Texas corporations for the control of the public domain on the one hand; and a contest between large corporations and settlers for the occupation of the public lands on the other hand. East Texas politicians and their constituents were primarily interested in collecting revenue from the public domain, and also in preventing large corporations from establishing permanently a monopolistic control over the lands in Western Texas. Settlers also fought against monopolies in their efforts to acquire West Texas lands for settlement. This contest finally resulted in the formation of a land policy by the State for the management and disposition of its public lands.

The Act of 1879 had almost disastrous effects. Speculation and fraud became rampant. "Millions of acres were bandied about and sales negotiated in the two hemispheres before a compass had been set or a chain stretched," declared Land Commissioner Walsh. In his annual report in 1882 the Commissioner declared that if a corporation or capitalist wanted one hundred or five hundred sections all that was necessary was to secure the title of the railroad companies to the odd numbered sections and then fill in borrowed names of wife and children on the even numbered sections applied for and the thing was accomplished. Combinations were formed at county seats, and, by using fictitious names, every valuable section in the county was filed on, and thus withheld from market for ninety days. At the end of the ninety days the process was repeated with the

¹ Captain W. C. Walsh, who was Land Commissioner of Texas at this time, stated that the Act of 1879 authorized the sale of the unappropriated public land of the state at fifty cents per acre, but nowhere in the act itself is such provision stated. See Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume IX, pp. 55-59.

result that bona fide purchasers had to pay as high as \$300.00 to \$500.00 to grafters for the right to purchase lands.²

Almost every other man you met in El Paso, and throughout the West generally, had a 'valid file' to sell. Every prosperous looking stranger with a 'grip' in his hand was immediately tackled and on entering a barber shop was made an easy victim while the barber plied his trade and his proverbial tongue in extolling the file he had on fifty to one hundred thousand acres. The same tactics were followed as the barkeeper stirred the ordered toddy. Nearly all of these 'files' expired, many after their sale to speculators, but others were made in good faith, or at least with the intent of paying the state the purchase money. But in several of these 'files' for one million or over, the 'capitalist' who proposed to finance the enterprise, formed a partnership with some practical surveyor in whose name the business was conducted.³

As a result of such fraudulent schemes all private transactions were paralyzed. The Board for the Investigation of Land Frauds in its Report in 1884 referred 750,000 acres to the Attorney General for suit to recover lands acquired by evasion and violation of the Acts of 1879 and 1881. The Report stated further that all lands purchased under the Act of 1879 was unconstitutional.⁴

This orgy of speculation and fraud brought the public domain of Texas forcibly to the attention of the state legislature. That body then became the focus and the forum of debates which reflected and aroused public opinion all over the state on the question of the disposal of lands in the public domain.

Senator Terrell warned his colleagues that three powerful forces were at work to shape legislation in disposing of school lands. First, were the stockmen who wanted to lease the lands; second, the railroads who wanted the price of school lands so high that they would have a monopoly on the sale of lands; third, the land speculators who had lands for sale and would profit by high priced land. Terrell warned the senate against granting monopolies of the soil to any of these factions.⁵

² Report of Land Commissioner, 1882, pp. 5 and 6.

³ Charles W. Ramsdell, Jr., "Memories of a Texas Land Commissioner, W. C. Walsh," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume XLIV, p. 487.

⁴ See Report of the Board, State Archives, Austin, Texas.

⁵ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 13, 1883. State Archives, Austin.

The legislative debates on the disposition of public lands provoked the question as to whether the sale or the lease of the public lands would be preferable. There were strong advocates for each plan, as well as opposition to any further legislation relating to these lands. The cattlemen assumed a leading role in attempting to maintain the status quo, or to shape whatever legislation that might be enacted. The Stock Raisers Association, at its annual meeting in March, 1882, adopted the following resolution on the subject:

Whereas, we believe that if the laws now on the Statute Books are strictly enforced the stock interests of Texas will receive that degree of protection and encouragement necessary for the profitable raising of stock; and Whereas, we believe that the bill known as the Lease Bill, which was introduced in the 17th legislature, if passed into law, would be productive of much evil consequences and fruitless of good; and Whereas, we believe that the sale of the State's lands in large bodies to one individual or corporation is contrary to the genius of our free institutions and has a tendency to organize and create huge corporations in our state: Therefore be it Resolved, That it is the sense of this convention that no legislation of any character is necessary for the benefit of the Stock interests of Northwestern Texas, and that we look upon any attempted change of existing laws or the enactment of any new laws on the subject as inimical to the interests of the Stockmen of Northwest Texas.⁶

The annual convention of the Stockmen, which met in Austin, February, 1883, petitioned the legislature; 1. To insure occupants territory for grazing purposes, and preference over outside parties; 2. To fix an annual rental price at two cents per acre; 3. To make the term of the leasehold not less than twenty years.⁷

Representative Matlock of the Texas Panhandle submitted figures to show that by the sale of the public lands at two dollars per acre, forty years time at the rate of four percent interest, the state would have \$20,000,000 worth of land in his district alone. Forty million acres, he said, would save the state \$40,-

⁶ See Minutes of the Association, 1882, p. 40.

⁷ This petition was signed by John D. Simpson, D. H. Snyder, H. H. Campbell, W. F. Lewis, B. Gatewood, Charles Goodnight, and Edwin E. Wilson. See *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 9, 1883. State Archives, Austin.

ooo,ooo. But "pass a lease bill and you will have all the competition among the cattlemen and they will arrange it so no leasing will be done".⁸ *The Austin Daily Statesman* favored the lease of lands because it would bring a large revenue to the school fund "whereas if the sales plan were adopted no lands would be sold and cattlemen would continue to use them as now".⁹

Land Commissioner Walsh who was well schooled in Texas public lands from first hand observation and experience, took a more logical view of the situation.¹⁰ He was strongly opposed to the sale of the state's lands even at five dollars per acre because he believed that, by adopting such a policy, it would only be a matter of time until the school fund would be entirely inadequate to meet educational needs. To figure so much land at so much per acre, he observed, was a simple problem in arithmetic, but, he queried, "who can figure up for us the increase of our scholastic population? And how long will the interests of this stationary fund yield an appreciable *per capita* for the children of our growing state?" It requires but a hasty glance at our educational statistics to discover that the greatly increased sales of these lands, in the past two years, have added little or nothing to the amount per head of our scholastic population." Moreover he continued:

In passing legislation for the school lands one difficulty to be met is the conflict between the interest of the school fund and the settlement of those portions of our state where these lands are situated. Actual settlers demand cheap lands for homes, on easy terms. The school fund demands that the highest price be secured and the best rate of interest possible, consistent with prompt payment. If these lands are to be disposed of only to actual settlers, the sales will be insignificant compared with the whole amount, and the great body

⁸ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 13, 1883.

⁹ See issue of February 14, 1883.

¹⁰ Walsh became a clerk in the General Land Office in September, 1857. He was appointed Land Commissioner by Governor Hubbard in June, 1878, to fill the unexpired term of J. J. Groos who died in office. Walsh was elected to the office in November, 1878, and was reelected for three successive terms, serving until January, 1887. See *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume XLIV, pp. 481-483.

of them will benefit only those who, without cost, feed their herds upon them. If their lease is provided for, or sales in large bodies, we are confronted with the danger of large landed monopolies, which will strangle our frontier and erect a Chinese wall against settlement. . . . If, then, the sale for money will yield but a temporary increase of our school facilities, it behooves us to seek in time some other method for their management. Raising the price does not change the question, but simply postpones the final catastrophe; and *in the interest of free education*, I see but one course left, and that is to LEASE ALL PASTURE, TIMBER, AND MINERAL LANDS for a term of years, and sell, if at all, only to actual settlers.¹¹

When Hobart came to Texas in 1882 this proposed legislation was pending. Since this legislation vitally affected the New York Company's lands, he followed it closely and became thoroughly familiar with the legal aspects and the economic phases involved. Moreover, the discussions and proposals of these land laws were of much value to Hobart in formulating his land policy in later years.

After more than two years of agitation and discussion the legislature finally passed the Land Act of 1883 which provided for the "classification, sale and lease" of lands belonging to the state which had been set apart for the schools and eleemosynary institutions. Land Commissioner Walsh exerted much influence in framing the bill. The Act of 1883 created a State Land Board composed of the Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, Treasurer, and Commissioner of the General Land Office. It provided for a minimum of four cents per acre per annum on the lease of grazing lands for a period "not exceeding ten years." Lands were to be classified into agricultural, timber, and grazing lands. Timber and grazing lands were to be retained for actual settlers. All lands remained subject to sale in tracts not to exceed 640 acres of agricultural or timber lands, and "seven sections of unwatered pasture land." Time of payment was thirty years with interest at the rate of five percent per annum. Preference was given to the sale of all lands, but where the leases were made in tracts of not more than one section

¹¹ Report of Land Commissioner, September, 1882, p. 7, and following.

per person the lease was absolute for the ten year period.¹²

The Act of 1883, whether considered from the standpoint of the sale or the lease of lands, was primarily a revenue measure. Proper provision was not made for the enforcement of the act and it was, therefore, violated with impunity. The introduction of barbed wire into West Texas the same year that the act was passed made it possible for corporations to enclose large tracts of land belonging both to the state and to individuals. These lands were used for grazing purposes without paying rentals. Both the settlers and the small cowmen were restricted from these enclosures. This led to the fence cutting war in 1883. Thousands of miles of wire fence were cut along the frontier of settlement by the small cowmen and the nesters in protest against the fencing of the ranges.¹³ Feuds developed, much property was destroyed, and there was even loss of life.

The fence cutting feud forced Governor John Ireland to convoke a special session of the legislature in January, 1884, to enact legislation that would put an end to this pernicious practice. Senator Terrell introduced a herd bill at this session which is commonly known as the Enclosure act. This bill provoked a hot discussion between its proponents and the representatives of both the corporations and the free grass elements. Representative Browning of the free grass region preferred fence cutting to the herd law that prevented grazing on state lands. The passage of such a bill, he argued, would result in a decline in values of stock of all kinds, and an exodus of small stockmen from Northwest Texas, to the detriment in general to all parts of the state. The cattle business, he claimed, paid one-fifth of the revenues of the state.¹⁴

¹² The act fixed a minimum price of \$5.00 per acre for timbered lands; \$3.00 per acre for lands with permanent water; and \$2.00 for unwatered pasture lands. See Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume IX, pp. 85-89.

¹³ For an excellent discussion on fence cutting see R. D. Holt, "The Introduction of Barbed Wire into Texas and the Fence Cutting War", *West Texas Historical Yearbook*, June, 1930.

¹⁴ *Dallas Daily Herald*, February 7, 1884. State Archives, Austin.

Senator Temple Houston denied that fence cutting had grown out of the use of school lands by herds grazing upon them, but declared that it was "the fruit of a mistaken land policy on the part of the state." He contended that large tracts of land had been acquired legitimately by individuals and corporations; that fence cutting had been caused by "the extraordinary and sudden advance of civilization into the Southwest," produced in a great measure by the extension of railroads to the frontier border of the state, the influx of capital, and the migration of people to cheap lands: all these conspired to make an accumulation of vast bodies of land in the hands of individuals and corporations.¹⁵

The *Dallas Daily Herald*, however, in commenting on the fence cutting war declared that, "The fact remains, plain and undeniable, that there was no such thing as fence cutting known, till the causes had grown to such a degree as to warrant the conviction that the great bulk of West and Northwest Texas, was alarmingly passing into the control of a few wealthy men and corporations, largely non-resident and materially alien to the United States, to be held without population as grazing grounds. And this, too, by fencing lands belonging to others. If as much pains had been taken to show the facts on this side—the outrages for years committed on poor men, small landholders and stockmen—as by the other side to show the number of fences cut, the double picture would be startling".¹⁶

The Enclosure act became a law February 7, 1884.¹⁷ The act legalized enclosures, but made it a misdemeanor to fence lands belonging to the state or to individuals without the owner's consent. Heavy penalties were fixed for violations of the law by fencing, herding, or loose herding stock on lands unlawfully enclosed. After the passage of this act the fence cutting war

¹⁵ *Dallas Daily Herald*, January 22, 1884. State Archives, Austin.

¹⁶ *Dallas Daily Herald*, February 6, 1884. State Archives, Austin.

¹⁷ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume IX, pp. 600-603.

soon ended, and one of the most serious crises in the development of West Texas lands was passed. For the first time the arm of the law was beginning to be recognized on the West Texas frontier.

The Land Act of 1883 was not satisfactory to the state, to the settlers, nor to the cattlemen. Land Commissioner Walsh reported to the called session of the legislature in 1884 that out of an estimated 40,000 sections of land held by the state in 1883, 30,000 sections had no marks on their lines or corners, and would have to be determined by actual survey.¹⁸ The report of the State Land Board to the legislature in 1885 showed that 1,250,000 acres of land had been sold at \$2.13 per acre, and that only 820,000 acres had been leased at four and one-half cents per acre.¹⁹ In 1884 a Land League was formed in Brown County to secure such legislation as would prevent land monopoly in Texas.²⁰ Governor Ireland, in his message to the legislature in 1887, discussed at length the defects of the Lease Bill of 1883. "It is safe to say," he concluded, "that at least one-half of our vast domain will not be sold at remunerative prices within the next fifty years, and unless they are leased the state cannot possibly derive any revenue from them." He argued that the lands were held at too high a figure and recommended that the price be reduced.²¹

While the Lease Law of 1883 had its defects, it also had its saving features. Under the provisions of the act the State Land Board was given power to make its own rules and regulations, and to administer the law. The Board fixed the rental price on state lands at eight cents per acre per annum, which many cattlemen refused to pay. Moreover, the State Board refused to

¹⁸ Report of Land Commissioner Walsh to Governor Ireland, January 8, 1884, p. 9. State Archives, Austin.

¹⁹ See Report of State Board, January 1, 1885. State Archives, Austin.

²⁰ *Dallas Daily Herald*, January 10, 1884. State Archives, Austin.

²¹ For the full text of the Message see *Austin Daily Statesman*, January 13, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

sell more than 1280 acres of land to each settler.²² The result was that land frauds continued and corporations, both foreign and domestic, by evading the law, continued to amass large tracts of land. *The Dallas Daily Herald* in the issue of January 31, 1884, proclaimed that, "corporations speculating in land, the great source of life of many stockholders who live in Scotland, France and England, rule with the sway of lords that vast domain, gathering wealth without labor and without price, while we, the trustees of a territory yet unborn, stand idly by. Three hundred and forty-three thousand farmers in Texas pay over a million dollars to educate the white and negro children in Texas, while fourteen thousand free-grass stockmen are enriched without paying one dollar rent for the 30,000,000 acres of school land on which they graze. Such open handed plunder of farmers, encouraged and permitted by law, has never been witnessed since William the Conqueror divided out the English farms among the Norman barons."

The Law of 1883 contemplated the unlimited sale and lease of all lands, both watered and dry lands, but the State Board withheld the lease of watered lands until the legislature would provide some method of selling these lands to settlers. Commissioner Walsh in 1886 claimed that such a policy had been justified because it had forced corporations and capitalists to "bore wells and construct tanks." He maintained that the competition as contemplated in the Act of 1883 was a farce; that the best lands were being used at the minimum price of four

22 "The reports (tabulated reports on the value of school lands in each county) began to come in speedily. They were nearly all in the same handwriting and not one acre was valued above the minimum of \$2.00. The law required the approval of these reports by the Land Commissioner, provided that in his opinion the lands were properly valued. There being no time limit set for approval, I put these reports in a pigeonhole.

"Letters, telegrams, petitions, protests, resolutions of indignation meetings and delegations, came by every mail and train. Finally a formal notice of mandamus proceedings was threatened. To this I gladly assented, and assured them I would obey the mandate when issued. . . . The syndicate did not want the lands for immediate use, their purpose being to keep them from falling into other hands, and to profit by the unearned increment." "Memories of a Texas Land Commissioner, W. C. Walsh." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume XLIV, pp. 484-485.

cents and for the maximum period of ten years.²³ The Board refused to accept the rental of four cents which was tendered by some of the large companies. These companies decided, therefore, to hold their ranges and pay nothing and they succeeded in doing so.

Agents were sent out from Austin to investigate illegal enclosures of state lands. The practice was found to be rather general and wide spread. These investigations brought about the famous impeachment trial of Judge Frank Willis in the Texas Senate. Willis, who was District Judge of the Texas Panhandle, was accused of aiding and abetting large cattle concerns, and more especially Colonel Charles Goodnight, in their evasion and violation of the law by enclosing state lands without paying the rentals. Willis was accused of conniving with cattlemen in organizing the jury in Donley County in the interest of Goodnight and others so as to defraud the school fund of rentals on the school lands.²⁴

The *Austin Daily Statesman* in the issue of February 11, 1887, stated the case as follows: "Willis is supposed to be the pet of Charles Goodnight, the Panhandle king, and while Willis is the nominal defendant to the prosecution, a keen, shrewd guesser would not have difficulty in discovering that the real desire is to pull one or two of Mr. Goodnight's fangs. A man who can fence two or three counties, as it were, carries, or is, at least able to carry a pretty stiff upper lip, which is about the size of it with Mr. Goodnight. Just how much he is ahead of the state on public domain, occupied and unpaid for, either by lease or purchase, would require some little while to determine. That there is a strong force after his scalp he knows full well, and he is there to take a hand in the scalping. With him is a lobby, strong in every sense of the term, and before the end comes, it is a safe prediction that there will be fur flying from

²³ Report of the Land Commissioner, 1886, p. 6.

²⁴ *Austin Daily Statesman*, January 23, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

somebody's coat-tail." *The Statesman* predicted further that the Willis investigation would monopolize a large size section of the time and talent lying around loose in legislative halls, committee rooms, and corridors.

The *Statesman* was by no means mistaken in its predictions. The Willis impeachment trial attracted state wide attention, and it called forth some of the best legal talent the state afforded. Attorney General James Stephen Hogg prosecuted Willis under the following charges:

1. His action was collusive, fraudulent and farcical. It was irregular and invalid to the defendants, and estopped the State.
2. The Judge was responsible for these irregularities, for he was the supreme power in charge, and as such, if he knew it, he was corrupt; if he did not he was guilty of criminal negligence. For the former he was impeachable for high crime; for the latter he would be guilty of an official misdemeanor.²⁵

Many of the Panhandle's leading citizens and legal lights were witnesses at the trial. Among these were: Judge H. H. Wallace of Oldham County who testified that Willis had a reputation among nine-tenths of the people of the Panhandle of being a partial judge, and that he favored influential cattlemen.²⁶ District Attorney Woodman testified as to the good character of Willis, and took the responsibility for the irregularity of witnesses. He called attention to the great difficulty of getting witnesses other than cattlemen. Judge O. H. Nelson opined that the impeachment was as much against the cattlemen as against Willis. Others who testified were: Captain G. W. Arrington, J. J. (Uncle Johnnie) Long, and Reverend Emanuel Dubbs.²⁷ Goodnight himself gave the following testimony:

²⁵ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 19, 1887.

²⁶ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 78, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

²⁷ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 17, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

"I have been on the frontier ever since 1846. When I went to the Panhandle there was no law and order, but now there is no better order to be found anywhere. I know Judge Willis to be a man of good reputation. I know all about the indictment. I went out of the grand jury room when my cases came up, and told the boys to consider them: I prosecuted the bill in the court. I never did approach Judge Willis in any way relative to his action as a District Judge. My understanding with District Attorney Woodman about the bonus was that he was to be paid by the (Cattlemens') Association to enforce the general laws against criminals. Five of the jurymen who sat on the trial were in my employ. Mr. Nelson and I kept Judge Willis from resigning. I met Judge Willis in Gass' saloon and told him all about the Attorney General's letter, and that I considered it a fight between the cattlemen and the people of the Panhandle".²⁸

After a sensational trial Willis was acquitted.²⁹ He soon returned to his legal residence at Mobeetie where he was given a hilarious reception by his fellow townsmen and cowboy comrades. At that time Quanah was the terminus of the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad, and travellers went by stage from Quanah to Mobeetie. T. D. Hobart who was a fellow passenger on the stage from Quanah when Willis returned from his impeachment trial, gave the following account of the Judge's reception at his home town:

We arrived in old Clarendon soon after daybreak amid the ringing of school and church bells and firing of anvils, and there we changed drivers. The distance from Old Clarendon to Mobeetie, 50 miles, was covered by one driver, who went by the name of Roxy. . . . Ordinarily the stage would arrive at Mobeetie about sunset or a little later. Roxy whispered to me that 'the boys' had told him to push on the reins and try to reach Mobeetie an hour before sundown, as they were going to paint the town red. On our arrival within a few miles of Mobeetie we were met by some 25 or 30 cowboys, who, after congratulating the Judge and passing him one or two bottles, to which he was not averse, tied their lariats to every conceivable place to which they could fasten toward the front end of the stage, then over the horns of their saddles with them, and away they went with us. This was one of the wildest rides of.

²⁸ *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 17, 1887. State Archives, Austin. In an interview with a correspondent of the *Dallas News* Goodnight claimed that he had tendered his lease money regularly to the State Land Board at four cents per acre and they had refused it. For discussions of this subject see the *Austin Daily Statesman*, March 9, 1886; April 29, 1886; and April 30, 1886. State Archives, Austin.

²⁹ For a detailed discussion of the trial of Judge Willis, see J. Evetts Haley, "The Grass Lease Fight and the Impeachment of the First Panhandle Judge," *The South-western Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXXVIII, pp. 1 to 27.

my life. . . . After going in this manner for something like a mile, we met the whole concourse of citizens from all parts of the Panhandle with vehicles of every description in use in those days. The Judge was taken from the stage, transferred to a hack or ambulance and driven in triumph to town. . . . Mobeetie, in spite of its nine saloons was ordinarily one of the best ordered towns in the state, due largely to the influence of Captain G. W. Arrington, who was at that time sheriff. On that night, however, the officers told the boys they could have the town provided they did not go too far. They took the officers at their word and Mobeetie was certainly a wild town that night.⁸⁰

The continual agitation of the land question during the years from 1883 to 1887, climaxed by the Willis impeachment trial, had convinced the members of the Texas legislature, and the people of East Texas, that more effective land laws were necessary. Experience had also shown that the combination features of the sale and lease of lands provided for in the Act of 1883 were sound in policy. It was generally believed, however, that while the State Land Board had followed a wise policy in withholding lands from sale in large tracts to corporations, yet it had deprived the state of much revenue by setting the rental price too high.

The Austin Daily Statesman in the issue of March 18, 1887, stated the problem clearly and succinctly when it declared that if the state could use her public lands wisely and prudently; regulate their utility; gain for herself a revenue from them; and at the same time hold them out as an inducement to immigrants, she would have solved one of the most difficult of all kinds of law, "from whose solution many nations have turned with failure stamped upon them. Taking every consideration into account," the *Statesman* continued, "it does seem that the leasing system is the most suited to the needs of Texas. No other policy can combine present advantages and hope of future betterment. Territory equal in size to any of the original thirteen states is to be disposed of, or at least so dealt with that the state may not be swindled on the one hand by excesses under poor

⁸⁰ T. D. Hobart, "Some of the Characters and Customs of Old Mobeetie", *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume II, pp. 123-129.

laws, or on the other by too sweeping and radical action on the part of the legislature."

The State Land Board also, as a result of its experience in administering the Act of 1883, had reached the same conclusion with reference to a land policy. This Board reported to the Governor in 1886 that the act for the sale and lease of lands and the Enclosure act were being openly violated; that over 100,000 square miles in the western part of the state, half of which was educational lands, were held by a population not exceeding five thousand souls; that a majority of the owners of stock were non-residents of the state; that attempts to enter and settle upon these lands, illegally occupied, were discouraged to such an extent that settlement was retarded. The Board concluded its report by recommending that new laws be passed to meet the emergency, backed by a constabulary force to enforce existing laws. "In a population of over two million souls," said the report, "at least ninety-eight percent are interested in realizing a revenue from school lands, until wanted for settlement; yet two percent have so far successfully opposed such utilization. There will be a day of reckoning".⁸¹

The final outcome of all of this agitation, discussion, and experimentation in search of a workable policy for the administration of the state's public lands was the Land Act of 1887. This act retained the essentials of the Act of 1883 but added important changes and modifications. The Act of 1887 did away with the State Land Board and gave the Land Commissioner full power to administer the law, subject only to the approval of the Governor. According to the act, lands were to be "carefully and skillfully classified" into agricultural, timber, and pasture lands. A plot of each section was to be made showing the amount of timber and open land; its location, quality of the soil, topography, quality and kind of timber, water sup-

⁸¹ Report for December 31, 1886. State Archives, Austin.

ply, and location of permanent streams. Lands were to be sold to settlers only in multiples of one section of agricultural land, or four sections of pasture land to each settler. The act provided for a penalty of forfeiture for attempts to transfer such lands to a corporation. The price of timber lands was fixed at \$5.00 per acre, agricultural lands at \$3.00, and pasture lands at \$2.00; one-fortieth down, and the balance in equal payments extending over a period of forty years with interest at the rate of five percent per annum. Actual occupants were given six months in which to purchase lands, and all purchasers were required to live on the land for three successive years before permanent title to the land was granted. An absolute lease of five years on pasture land was provided for at the rate of four cents per acre per annum, with the right of refusal to re-lease at the end of the five year period. Agricultural lands were leased subject to sale. Settlers who purchased within leaseholds could turn loose one cow, or four sheep or goats, per acre on lands purchased. Enclosure by fencing or line riding incurred heavy penalties. Gates had to be provided every three miles where large tracts were enclosed, and all leases were exempt from taxation.⁸²

The Law of 1887, though somewhat late in being formulated, gave to Texas a definite policy in disposing of its public lands. The act has three distinguishing features: it closed the door to corporations; it retained all public lands for settlers, and enforced the leasing of such lands for revenue purposes until they were ready for settlement. This bill, written by Temple Houston and others, was pronounced by the *Austin Daily Statesman* to be, "one of the shrewdest and most artfully drawn bills that has ever been presented in this or any other legislature. . . . This bill takes strong ground—its measures are constitutional and are founded in sound policy".⁸³

⁸² Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, IX, pp. 881-889.

⁸³ *The Austin Daily Statesman*, February 11 and March 3, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

The legislative Act of 1887 grew out of more than a decade of fraudulent schemes and speculative enterprises which cost Texas millions of acres of its public domain. The act shows strongly the influence of these bitter years of experience, and also the sound logic that was propounded by Commissioner Walsh in 1882. The soundness of the measure is attested by the fact that, although slightly amended from time to time, it has remained in its essentials as a permanent policy in the administration of Texas' public lands.

THE FIGHT FOR SETTLERS

THE PEOPLE in West Texas followed with much interest the legislation relating to the public domain. Public opinion in the western portion of the state was divided on this legislation. The small cattlemen opposed the enclosure provisions of this legislation because they felt that enclosures favored the large cattle companies. The large cattle concerns favored enclosures because this gave them an opportunity to fence the small cattlemen out and secure a monopoly on the grass.¹ Both groups were opposed to the settlers. The scattered settlers on the other hand strongly opposed the leasing features of all legislation because they believed that such legislation was designed to favor the corporations and prevent the settlement of West Texas lands.

The Albany Star, in discussing the Enclosure Act of 1884, summarized the situation as follows: "Who wants a herd law and why? The eastern part of the state wants it because they have but few stock and are an agricultural people. The large pasture men want it because they have the facility of grazing their stock on their own land without the necessity of a herder, and because when the law is passed they can buy out the small stockmen for a low price. The large landed monopolies which the legislature has built up, and through the herd law seek to foster, want it because it will increase the price of their land. But the small farmer and the small stockmen out west do not want it because of want of sufficient land to herd their stock

¹ "In the days of free grass many cattlemen sold their brands, and with the brand went the ranges. . . . Soon after 1882 many small ranchers who were crowded out of West Texas went into New Mexico." W. H. Hopkins, Canadian, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, October 25, 1925; Jim B. Wilson, Alpine, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, January 1, 1928. E. H. Brainard of Canadian, Texas, in discussing this subject made the interesting observation that, "when the leasing of lands started the small cowmen were soon weeded out if they did not buy or lease. Any people in this democratic country who will not do their share will eventually be weeded out." E. H. Brainard to L. F. Sheffy, December 29, 1929

would be forced to sell to the large pasture man and at his own price".²

The Tascosa Pioneer which was also the spokesman for the settlers in Northwest Texas, in commenting on the Land Act of 1883, observed that "In the past the opinion seems to have obtained generally, both among the law makers and the people who send them, that the lease system is of more practical benefit than the sales system. Laws have been framed systematically and continually to bring about this very end and no other, and settlement has been excluded from an immense and fertile section as if the studied purpose were to give the Panhandle and West Texas over to a system of perpetual landlordism with cattle grazing the only occupation".³ West Texans at the State Convention in 1886 urged the state to make some provision for the disposition of land to settlers, "but were voted down by East Texans".⁴

The antagonism between the stockmen and settlers became bitter as a result of legislative enactments and the attempts of the cattlemen to retain control of West Texas lands. The settlers strongly resented the stockmens' contention that these lands were unfit for agriculture. Cattlemen spread far and wide the prevalent idea that West Texas lands were "fit for grazing only." At the Stockmens' Convention in 1880 the proposed legislation for the sale or lease of public lands was one of the main subjects discussed. The Convention declared it to be a well known fact that West Texas lands were suitable for grazing only, and, therefore should be sold at a fair price or leased to ranchmen. The Convention opposed any measure that would tend to "settle up grazing regions of Texas with a farming class of immigrants who, from their own personal knowledge know nothing

² *The Albany Star* as quoted by the *Dallas Daily Herald*, January 15, 1884.

³ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, August 13, 1887. Files Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas.

⁴ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, August 21, 1886.

of the adaptability of the country, but being duped by false and misrepresentations of land agents, immigration schemes, railroads and others interested, may be induced to flood our western country. Thus driving out the stockmen and forever killing the most lucrative industry of which our country is susceptible. . . . While the farmer is thus experimenting and hanging on hoping for better times, he is entirely and forever ruining a certain amount of range, which after once plowed or turned under can never be restored".⁵

Land Commissioner Walsh, in defending his administration of the Act of 1883, declared that after the law was passed more than a million acres were applied for in seven-section bids, and that affidavits uniformly described the land as being "fit for grazing only".⁶

Many people believed, or pretended to believe, that the lands in Northwest Texas were not even fit for grazing. *The United States Democrat* in discussing the Llano Estacado in 1884 deplored the fact that "in the Llano Estacado, or Staked Plains, are 15,000,000 acres of table land, elevated and dry. As the greater part of this section is from fifty to seventy-five miles from water it is worthless, as cattle cannot graze, except in winter, more than ten miles from water. What will be done with this large area of desert, time alone will tell; at present it is not only valueless, but a detriment to travel.

"Above the Llano Estacado, and between the Indian Territory and New Mexico, is what is called the Panhandle. This region consists of several million acres, of which three million belongs to the State of Texas.⁷ Nearly one-half of the Panhandle is without water, hence unavailable for cattle raising".⁸

⁵ *The Texas Livestock Journal*, as quoted by the *Fort Griffin Echo*, December 11, 1880. Texas Collection, University of Texas Library, Austin.

⁶ Report of Land Commissioner, September 1, 1886, p. 5.

⁷ This refers to the 3,050,000 acres set aside for the building of the State Capitol in 1879. See J. Evetts Haley, *The XIT Ranch of Texas*, p. 54.

⁸ *The United States Democrat* as quoted in the *San Angelo Standard*, December 13, 1884. Fondren Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

The *Tascosa Pioneer*, in the issue of November 26, 1887, protested vigorously against an interview with Colonel Charles Goodnight, published in the *Kansas City Star*, to the effect that the Panhandle was not even a stock country much less fit for agriculture. The interview was re-published in Colorado, Kansas, and New Mexico papers. *The Pioneer* maintained that this was a deliberate attempt on the part of the "cattle barons" to keep out settlers and thus continue the lease law, "that most hideous of iniquities, that stain on the statutes, that begettall of the devil, that—that lease law."

Such ideas about West Texas lands as published in the newspapers mentioned above were not new. Every expedition that had been made across the Texas plains from Coronado in 1541 to the Marcy expeditions in the middle of the nineteenth century brought back the same kind of report about this region: it was a dreary, desolate, desert region unfit for human habitation. Moreover, all maps existing in the Eighties of the nineteenth century showed West Texas as the southern extremity of the Great American Desert.

Now that these western lands were proving to be a good stock country, the cattle industry became a valuable potential source of revenue to the state, provided that the lands could continue to be used for grazing purposes. *The Tascosa Pioneer* estimated that there were a million cattle in Texas Panhandle in 1887, and that taxable valuations of property were in the neighborhood of twelve to fifteen millions of dollars.⁹ It would be safe to assume that the remaining lands in West Texas grazed at least an additional two million head of cattle. Such a vast cattle kingdom was calculated to attract the attention of legislators who were in search of taxable property for state revenue purposes. It was only natural, therefore, that the legislature would seek to maintain and perpetuate this rapidly growing industry. While legislators, in the Land Act of 1887, made a practical

⁹ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, April 30, 1887.

attempt to encourage settlement by selling land to settlers only; yet they could not resist the temptation of the potential wealth which the cattle industry afforded. Therefore, the Act of 1887 continued to make provision for the leasing of the public lands to cattlemen.

The counterpart of the cattle industry in West Texas was a stock farmer on every section or two of land, as Hobart was to prove later, producing forage crops, a better grade of cattle, and multiplying the wealth of the land; but such an industry existed only in the minds of the few who favored the settlers. Agricultural development was as yet only in the beginning of the experimental stages. Thus geography, tradition, and the law of economics were all on the side of the cattlemen in their fight to retain the grazing lands on the West Texas frontier.

However, the southern end of the Great American Desert was now within the confines of Texas, and Texas had long been considered a rich and resourceful region. The natural resources in the eastern part of the state had been tapped before the Civil War, and its wealth and economic possibilities had attracted not only thousands of Anglo-Americans, but also many people in the Latin American and European countries. Now that Texas and the Southwest were opened up to the Anglo-Americans, West Texas occupied the center of the stage. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the western part of the state came to be looked upon as a land of great potential wealth and resources. Newspapers, immigration societies, and later railroad companies and land corporations, began to vision West Texas as a great agricultural region, and were soon advertising it as such. Such organizations began to try to dispel the idea that West Texas was a desert land.

The South Western Immigration Company was among the first to pronounce this region a land fit for agriculture. The prospectus referred to in a previous chapter, in describing the

Texas Panhandle in 1881, made the following significant observation:

Many of the counties of the Panhandle lie wholly upon the Staked Plain, and compare favorably as respects soil, etc., with the rest. The prevailing notions in regard to this great table-land must be abandoned. It has been held as a desert, and was long so marked on the maps; but it deserves no such designation, being naturally for the most part of very fertile soil, covered with rich grasses. The sandy belts which cross it are the only exception to the rule, and these serve their valuable uses as reservoirs and viaducts for water. The time will come, we doubt not, when the Staked Plain will be famous for its crops of wheat and other small grain.¹⁰

The Fort Worth Gazette was among the first of the Texas newspapers which had an unbounded faith in the agricultural possibilities and in the future, of the Texas Panhandle and the Southwest. *The Tascosa Pioneer*, always a staunch advocate of the settlers in their fight against the cattlemen, declared that the *Gazette* had been a consistent and powerful friend of the actual settler on the frontier; that it had been an exponent of such a land system as would unquestionably work the most substantial good to the greatest number of people. In discussing the issues between the settlers and the cattlemen over the control of West Texas lands the *Gazette* had the following to say: "The man who declares that he can draw a line in the West which marks the terminus of arable lands, misrepresents its conditions, and is an enemy of its interests".¹¹

Those who favored the settlers in West Texas had a long, hard fight in their efforts to break up the monopoly on grass which the cattlemen held on the western prairies, and in proving that this region was suited for agriculture. Ideas, long established, that this region was fit for grazing only were difficult to change. It required years of experimentation to prove the agricultural value of these lands. Fortunately, however, the first period of agricultural experimentation came in the transition period of the latter nineteenth century, and it was accompanied

¹⁰ *Texas: Her Resources and Capabilities*, p. 53.

¹¹ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, June 19, 1886.

by many other changes. These combined changes favored those whose main business was farming and stock raising on a small scale.

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The opposition of West Texas settlers to the leasing of the state's lands manifested itself in various ways. Difficulties between the settlers and the Rocking Chair Ranch in Collingsworth County provoked the Wheeler County grand jury to declare that, "The lease law is a disturbing element in our section of the country. The great State of Texas, in her greed for money, accepts bids from concentrated capital for the use of her public lands, to the detriment and oppression of that class of her population who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow".¹² The Creswell Land and Cattle Company was accused of driving settlers out of their 400,000-acre lease in Roberts and Ochiltree counties. Other large companies were given credit for intimidating settlers who attempted to locate on state lands within their enclosures.

The editor of *The Tascosa Pioneer* called attention to the fact that state lands were being leased by large companies subject to classification as provided for in the Land Act of 1887, but before such classification was actually made. Nominally under such a plan, he argued, if the lands were found to be agricultural lands when classified, the settler would have a right to come in and buy the land; but that actually the advantage was given to the lease holder. "It leaves the country and the lands in no better condition than they were under the odious land board, and by leasing to the rich before classification when the poor can neither buy nor lease, the inevitable result is doubt and apprehension as to the wisdom or fairness of what will follow." He declared that ten newspapers were averring that "the lease law is a blight on business, a hindrance to settlement, and stands as an immoveable barrier across the path of further development".¹³

¹² Quoted by *The Tascosa Pioneer*, December 3, 1887.

¹³ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, August 20, 1887.

The editor of the *Pioneer* was convinced that the Lease Law of 1887 was the result of a conspiracy formed by the cattlemen on the one hand to perpetuate the cattle ranges in West Texas, and the farmers of the "piney woods" on the other hand to secure revenue from West Texas lands to maintain schools in the eastern part of the state. Therefore, he "unhesitatingly and unqualifiedly" pronounced it "a hideous legislative imposition, and ungenerous, a selfish enactment forced upon a great section by the prejudices and ignorance of the eastern half of the state. Little reflection do they seem to give this land business down by the Sabine river. Little do they care whether the west is ever settled, whether Texas offers any inducement to outside immigration, so that the last nickel possible is squeezed out as revenue for present use to the school fund".¹⁴

The legislative proceedings at Austin brought the fight between the settlers and the cattle companies forcibly to the attention of the people of West Texas. Public opinion in the Texas Panhandle was sharply divided over the issues involved. The Willis impeachment trial became the principal issue in the election of a district judge in the Panhandle in 1886. Judge Willis stood for reelection. He was opposed by Colonel W. H. Grigsby. Willis was accused of being in collusion with the cattle barons in their opposition to the lease law. The election was hard fought. The editor of the *Tascosa Pioneer*, always a champion of the cause of the settlers, supported Grigsby, while Willis' main support was in the eastern portion of the Panhandle with the focal center at Mobeetie. Willis won the election but this did not dampen one iota the hopes of the Grigsby followers. The people of the Panhandle followed the Willis impeachment proceedings with much concern. When the evidence of the trial was all in, the editor of the *Tascosa Pioneer* preceded the verdict of the Texas Senate with an analysis of the incriminating evi-

¹⁴ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, April 20, 1887.

dence which, he contended, would convict the Judge whatever the decision of the Senate might be. He concluded that:

It is not an enviable position in which this investigation has placed Judge Willis. . . . Right or wrong the people at large, unacquainted with the circumstances, with the accused Judge or with the conditions prevailing throughout the Panhandle, reach but one conclusion and reach it at once. Before the decision of the committee is known. . . . the public has its verdict made up. . . . The fact has been brought out that Mr. Willis at least knew of and permitted some things which the statutes make no provision for, that men were indicted, tried and acquitted who were not present at the court at all and who knew nothing of their trial until afterwards informed of it. This alone would have constituted at least a very irregular mode of procedure. . . . for the idea of a man being brought to account in court. . . . without an opportunity for defense is something very new in English or American jurisprudence. . . . But the testimony disclosed more than this. . . . It is charged, and proof seems sufficient, that the cattle companies have received very kind treatment at his hands, and the laws had a somewhat elastic interpretation. . . . The gravity of these charges is unusual, and it becomes necessary to say that the people of the Panhandle would be the first to condemn irregular 'collusory, fraudulent or farcical' proceedings of the kinds alleged or any other.¹⁵

A few days after this analysis was published the "unbelievable news" came of Judge Willis' acquittal. Editor Rudolph accepted the Senate dictum philosophically with the assertion that "free grass is no more," and that "while the range system has been legitimate and commendable" it was on its way out.

F. M. Patton of Mobeetie sounded a different and more prophetic note of reaction of the people of the Panhandle to the Willis trial. "Our judges may be impeached," he said, "foreign officers be put over us. We may be carried to distant counties for trial, all of which is seriously talked of, and for this reason there will be a deep, deep sympathy for everyone who may fall a victim to the condition of affairs. All that we want is peace, and all that will make peace is to be known as a quiet, law-abiding people, building up churches and school houses, towns and villages, planting orchards and forest trees, thus making homes as comfortable and pleasing as possible. Peace! All we want is to live under officers of our own election (the right of trial at

¹⁵ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, March 2, 1887.

home not to be taken away) to live in the Panhandle. To mingle with the quiet of her skies and never gaze on her with apathy".¹⁶

Economic forces were already at work which were to bring to the people of the Panhandle the "peace" and contentment they were clamoring for. In 1887 the Southern Kansas Railway was entering the Panhandle from the north and the Fort Worth and Denver was penetrating the same region from the east. These railroad companies began at once to advertise their lands for settlement. They called attention to the cheap lands, the fertile soil, healthful climate, pure water, and the capacity of the land to produce abundant crops. "The new Southwest, coming into commercial relations with the world, offers the last cheap, good lands under genial skies on the continent," declared the officials of the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad in advertising the "Pan Handle Route".¹⁷

Railroads enhanced the value of Panhandle lands and at the same time made them more easily accessible to settlers. As the price of land advanced the opposition to settlers decreased. The margin of profits on investments was gradually transferred to land sales rather than cattle production on a large scale. Cattle-men themselves soon came over to the commonly adopted opinion that the increased valuation which settlement would give to their lands would insure as great a profit to them in their sale as would cattle raising "without any of its contingencies and uncertainties." By the end of the century railroads and syndicates were refusing longer to lease their lands in consideration of the growing demands for land purchases. Lands in Northwest Texas were coming to be recognized as being admirably adapted to *stock farming*. Thus the law of economics was shifting to the side of the settlers.

By the end of the Eighties the editor of the *Tascosa Pioneer*

¹⁶ From *The Mobeetie Panhandle* as quoted by *The Austin Statesman*, March 16, 1887. State Archives, Austin.

¹⁷ "Agricultural Resources in the Texas Panhandle". Brochure published by the Fort Worth and Denver Railway Company in 1890.

ceased his vituperative discussions about the lease law and the "cattle barons". Inquiries began to pour into his office from all over the country asking about the price of land, availability of water, churches, schools, railroad prospects, and for "any other information." The columns of the *Pioneer* are filled with discussions on railroads in the Panhandle, the building of towns and cities, and stock farming. In a moment of extreme optimism the editor predicted that the Panhandle would become "the center of stock countries, the garden spot of Texas and the granary of the Union because, its land is richer, its water clearer, its air purer and fresher, its altitude higher and healthier, its domain wider and fairer, its people braver and freer and more intelligent, its prospects brighter and its whiskey better, than can be shown by any snide people or two-bit country anywhere." As the settlements increased and the country began to prosper the Panhandle editor declared that "the winter of our discontent is pretty well over, and will presently be succeeded by a new era of things."

When Hobart took charge of the New York and Texas Company's Panhandle lands the fight against the corporations was reaching its climax. Many of the large cattle companies were refusing to lease lands from the state at the eight cent per acre per annum rate fixed by the State Land Board, or to lease from landed corporations or individuals at any price. Cattle companies were making a strong and determined fight on the lease system. "Every misfortune, from a fall in the price of cattle to a protracted drouth, was laid at the door of the lease law." Newspapers were proclaiming to the world that no poor man could get a home in Texas; that the entire public domain had been surrendered to corporations, who had fenced it up and would allow no one to enter.¹⁸

At this time the million-acre domain of the New York and Texas Company in the Texas Panhandle was neither surveyed

¹⁸ See Report of Land Commissioner, September 1, 1886. State Archives, Austin.

nor leased. For years these lands had been used as a part of the free range, and in 1886 much of the Company's land was enclosed by others and were being used without paying rentals. Moreover, in many instances, cattle companies had leased the state lands and refused to pay rentals on the alternate sections which belonged to corporations or to individuals. Such companies frequently refused to allow anyone else to use lands belonging to others which they had enclosed. As late as 1888 Hobart wrote Evans that the Rowe Brothers had threatened to "make it hot for any other stockmen who attempted to occupy our lands in their pasture. . . . H. V. Rowe stated to me that they would continue to use our land and that he supposed that you would inform them when you wanted pay for it." Hobart also had perennial trouble in leasing the 180,000-acre tract of the Company's land in the Lazarus Pasture in Childress and Collingsworth counties. This pasture was purposely overstocked in order to make it undesirable for others to lease the New York Company's lands which were enclosed.¹⁹

Hobart's major problems therefore, in 1886 and following, were to collect rentals from his Company's lands, fence them, establish correct titles and boundary lines, and overcome the strong prejudice that existed against the corporation which he represented. Moreover, Evans believed that the New York Company should receive a higher rental on its lands than the four cent minimum fixed on state lands, since the state lands were exempt from taxation. Thus Hobart had to satisfy his employer and at the same time educate cattlemen to pay rentals on lands which they had long been accustomed to use without charge.

In the accomplishment of this task Hobart encountered many difficulties. Boundary and title difficulties have been discussed in a previous chapter. In addition to these the Act of 1887, while it was favorable in many ways to Hobart's program, yet it

¹⁹ Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

presented a great obstacle in that the act made it unlawful to enclose state lands that were not leased. This made it incumbent on Hobart to lease the alternate sections of school lands, together with his Company's lands, if they were to be enclosed. The Courts, however, came to his rescue. As a result of the practice of illegal enclosures by cattlemen "several lively lawsuits" developed. In a test case taken to the Supreme Court it was decreed that if a person owned or controlled land adjoining land belonging to another party, and if said party stocked his land to such an extent that his stock were forced to go on the adjoining land for sustenance, such a person was responsible for a reasonable rental.²⁰ This decision was of inestimable value to Hobart in the administration of the New York Company's lands.

For a decade Hobart wrestled with these problems. The years from 1895 to 1897 proved to be critical years in the management of the New York Company's lands. In 1895 the legislature reduced rentals on the state's agricultural lands to a three cent minimum for a period of five years, and pasture lands to two cents for a period of ten years.²¹ At this time many of the large cattle companies were closing out and Hobart found it most difficult to make leases on large tracts. He wrote Evans that, "Unleased pastures are certainly getting to be a serious thing. I shall do all I can to bring about a change. I crossed the North Fork Pasture this week from north to south and did not see a single head of cattle in it. Of course it had better be vacant than otherwise if not leased. . . . Grass is plentiful, cattle are scarce and leases are hard to make. . . . We will push collections and leases to the utmost,"²² Hobart complained to Evans in 1897 that George Tyng was leasing the Francklyn lands at three cents per acre and that this increased his difficulties in

²⁰ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, June 6, 1934.

²¹ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume X, pp. 793-805.

²² Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

making leases. He felt, however, that since the New York Company's lands were fenced they could not afford to reduce the lease price.

Hobart encountered opposition from settlers, especially in Childress and Collingsworth counties, who made a determined effort to prevent the leasing of lands in large tracts. In 1895 the legislature reduced the price of the state's agricultural lands from \$3.00 to \$2.00 per acre, and pasture lands to \$1.00 per acre. Two years later a further reduction of fifty cents per acre was made on agricultural lands.²⁸ This legislation gave somewhat of a boon to the sale of the state's lands in Northwest Texas, but Hobart's land sales in 1896 were almost nil. He could not compete with the state in its land policy. He was confident, however, that such a policy would encourage settlement. Evans was less optimistic. He complained to Hobart in 1896 that too much of the Company's lands was going without lease. Hobart replied that he was receiving numerous inquiries for leases on tracts ranging from four to eight sections, and he recommended that his Company lease a portion of its lands in blocks this size in order to encourage settlement. He believed also that more care should be exercised in the selection of lessees; that as far as possible lessees should be selected who were looking for permanent homes.

During this period the state was having similar difficulties in the administration of its lands in lower West Texas. In 1888 Land Commissioner Hall reported that only one-thirtieth of the two million acres of University lands were leased. He recommended a reduction in the rental price so that sufficient inducement would be given to provide water and fences on these lands. He said that out of 916 leases executed to date only 164 contained more than five sections, and that the average for all leases was 7103 acres. "This should have a tendency," he thought, "to remove the prejudice which has existed against

²⁸ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume X, pp. 793-805; 1238-1242.

the appropriation of immense areas by any one person or firm."

In 1900 the Commissioner declared that, "observation has proven that corporations should not be permitted to hold land for grazing purposes;" that "a number of pastures have been discovered which were formerly occupied and used by corporations which owe the state several thousand dollars. It can never be collected for the reason that some have become insolvent, others have sold out and their presidents, secretaries and treasurers reside beyond the jurisdiction of the State while others have been sold and dissolved".²⁴

By the end of the nineteenth century settlers had occupied most of the state lands in Northwest Texas. The four-section Act of 1895 and the consequent reduction of the price of state lands both in 1895 and 1897 gave an impetus to settlement. The breaking up of many of the large cattle companies, and the distribution of their lands into smaller tracts, increased the demand for the few large tracts remaining in the northwestern portion of the state. In 1900 Hobart was leasing his Company's lands at from five to eight cents per acre and was collecting thousands of dollars in rentals. He was also selling to small ranchers a number of tracts ranging in size from fifteen to twenty thousand acres.

By the beginning of the twentieth century most of the New York Company's lands were sold or were under fence. Barbed wire, windmills, and court decisions had made the laws applicable to West Texas. The pastoral period was at an end in Northwest Texas, and thousands of acres of western lands had passed into the hands of small stock farmers. With these changes came fixity and permanence. West Texas was on the verge of a new era which was soon to transform it into one of the most productive agricultural and stock raising regions in the nation.

In 1908 Land Commissioner Terrell announced that leasing

²⁴ See Land Commissioner's Report for 1888 and 1900. State Archives, Austin.

had been practically suspended on account of the demand of the home hunters. The Commissioner became the spokesman for a new social and economic philosophy in regard to the use of the western lands. "It has been the settled policy of the State," he said, "to favor sales rather than leases. If the public wants the land for homes they should have it. As a developer of a country a few good homes are worth more than many ranches . . . with a thousand cows upon every hill and in every valley; the cry of one child is more civilizing than the 'bleat' of ten thousand calves; the smoke from the chimney of one good home is worth more than all the fires of all the branding pens; the family roundup before the open fireplace . . . is worth more than all the assembly around the camp fires of the roundups of all the pastures".²⁵

By the turn of the century the fight for settlers had been won. The arm of the law had at last been extended over the state's public domain. Political, social, and economic forces were all pointing inevitably toward the occupation and settlement of West Texas, and permanent organized institutions were taking shape. This transition period presented to Hobart a new series of problems, but his years of training and experience fitted him well for the task that was before him.

²⁵ Report of Land Commissioner for 1908. State Archives, Austin.

COUNTY ORGANIZATION IN WEST TEXAS

AS SOON as the Indians were settled permanently on the reservations and the bison were cleared off the West Texas plains, the Texas legislature took the first steps toward establishing law and order in the region, preparatory to the colonization and settlement of the public domain. As the state extended the arm of the law across the one hundredth meridian local institutions began to take shape. Extension of the legislative and judicial branches of the state government to West Texas was followed immediately by the organization of county governments. At the turn of the century institutional developments had taken permanent shape and West Texas had been incorporated into the body politic.

On August 21, 1876, the Texas legislature passed an act creating fifty-four counties out of the old Young and Bexar district in Northwest Texas. These counties were named after leaders of Texas revolutionary fame, their boundaries were defined, and they were attached to Clay, Young, Jack, and Shackelford counties for judicial purposes.¹ In 1879 Wheeler County was organized, and on July 8th of that year, it was incorporated into the Tenth Judicial District with twenty-six counties in the Texas Panhandle attached to it for judicial purposes and for the purpose of organization.² It was not until

¹ These counties were: Collingsworth, Donley, Gray, Wheeler, Roberts, Hemphill, Lipscomb, Hall, Ochiltree, Childress, Bailey, Lamb, Hale, Motley, Cottle, Floyd, Briscoe, Swisher, Castro, Parmer, Deaf Smith, Oldham, Hartley, Moore, Hutchinson, Hansford, Sherman, Dallam, Potter, Carson, Randall, Armstrong, King, Dickens, Crosby, Lubbock, Cochran, Hockley, Stonewall, Kent, Garza, Lynn, Terry, Yoakum, Scurry, Fisher, Borden, Dawson, Gaines, Andrews, Martin, Howard, Mitchell and Nolan. Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, VIII, pp. 1070-1078.

² These counties were Childress, Hall, Briscoe, Swisher, Castro, Parmer, Deaf Smith, Randall, Armstrong, Donley, Collingsworth, Gray, Carson, Potter, Oldham, Hartley, Moore, Hutchinson, Roberts, Hemphill, Lipscomb, Ochiltree, Hansford, Sherman, Dallam, and Greer.

Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, IX, pp. 60-61. When the final adjustment of the eastern boundary of the Texas Panhandle was made Greer County, by decision of the United States Supreme Court, became a part of Oklahoma.

February, 1881, that the twenty-six counties of the Texas Panhandle were organized into the Thirty-Fifth Judicial District; and by March, 1883, the remaining counties in Northwest Texas were set apart as the Twelfth Judicial District. In 1882 the fifty-six counties in Northwest Texas were designated as the Nineteenth Senatorial District, and sixty-six counties in this part of the state were given the right to elect one representative to the legislature.³

During the period from 1880 to 1905 there was a gradual migration of people toward the western frontier in Texas. By 1870 settlements in the state had reached a line drawn from the southwestern part of Clay County to the southeastern corner of Kinney County. This line, which extends from the one hundredth meridian to the ninety-eighth meridian, forms with the one hundredth meridian a great V with its base in Kinney County. Within this V lie all or part of twenty-six counties with an area of approximately 25,000 square miles. These were the first counties in Texas to be settled after the Civil War. By 1880, eighteen of the twenty-six counties embraced within this territory were organized, and the region had a population of 50,000 people. At the same time there were only six of the 109 counties in Texas, west of the one hundredth meridian, that were organized.⁴ This region with an area of 109,000 square miles had a population in 1880 of less than 25,000, or one person for every five square miles. In the fifty-four counties of Northwest Texas, with an area of approximately 50,000 square miles, there were 3,000 people in 1880, or one person for every seventeen square miles. By 1890 the population of Northwest Texas had increased to 22,000, or one person for about every two and one-half square miles; and in 1900 this region had 50,000 people, or one person for every square mile.⁵

³ Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, IX, pp. 100-101; 270; 335-338.

⁴ These counties were Wheeler, El Paso, Presidio, Pecos, Kinney, and Tom Green.

⁵ New York at this time had approximately 200 people per square mile; Tennessee, 50; Wisconsin, 36; California, 14; Texas as a whole approximately 14 people per square mile.

The organization of counties in Northwest Texas reveals that the flow of population into this section did not get well under way until after 1886. During the three year period from 1887 to 1890, eighteen of the fifty-four counties in Northwest Texas were organized, fourteen of them were in the twenty-six counties of the northern Panhandle. There were only nine of the fifty-four counties of Northwest Texas organized before 1887.⁶ Fourteen of the fifty-four counties were organized during the decade from 1891 to 1901, and thirteen counties, lying mostly in the extreme western part of the state, were organized after 1901.⁷ By 1902 two hundred twenty-six of the two hundred forty-three counties then in Texas were organized.⁸ In his report for September, 1890, Land Commissioner Hall called attention to the fact that "never before in the history of the West have settlement and development been so rapid as in the last two years. The unprecedented number of counties which have been organized demonstrates this. Month after month applications for the purchase of homes have averaged from forty to seventy-five a day. I have for two years been profoundly impressed by the hunger for homes by the landless multitudes of our state".⁹

The cattlemen did not wait for legislative acts to open the way for their entry into West Texas. They preceded the settlers by almost exactly twenty years and occupied all of the unappropriated lands of the free range. Here they established and developed institutions peculiar to their own needs. The ranch, the trail drive, the roundup, and the corporation were all essential parts of the cattle industry. The early cattlemen, being out-

⁶ The counties organized before 1887 were: Wheeler, 1879; Oldham, 1881; Donley, 1882; Crosby, 1886; Fisher, 1886; Scurry, 1884; Howard, 1882; Mitchell, 1881; and Nolan, 1881. See United States Census Report for 1880.

⁷ See United States Census Report for 1900.

⁸ The unorganized counties were Andrews, Bailey, Cochran, Crane, Dawson, Gaines, Garza, Gray, Hockley, Lamb, Loving, Lynn, Parmer, Terry, Upton, Winkler and Yoakum. See Land Commissioner's Report for September 1, 1902. It is interesting to notice that almost all of these counties are in the extreme western part of central West Texas.

⁹ Report of the Land Commissioner for September 1, 1890. State Archives, Austin.

side the reach of the law, set up their own customary laws on the open range. Theirs was a pastoral economy, and it was more elementary and less expensive than a system based on agriculture. Since the cattlemen were the first to occupy the grass region, and since they had already established their institutions here, they gave way reluctantly to a new and changing order; especially since such change involved the economics of the cattle industry.

The institutions of the cattle range were entirely unsuited to a more sedentary people who were engaged in stock farming. As soon, therefore, as the settlers got their homes established on the frontier they began to demand an organized society that would meet their own needs. Thus a conflict was inevitable between the two groups in their efforts to establish and maintain their respective institutions.

In the development of a political and civil order in a frontier region many adjustments have to be made: many conflicting interests have to be harmonized and stabilized. Such stability was made much more difficult on the West Texas frontier, not only because of the natural conflict of interests between the cattlemen and the stock farmers, but also because of the rapidity with which changes were made. The reorganization of West Texas institutions followed immediately after three railroads had penetrated the region. These railroads changed the place and pattern of settlements. The earliest small villages and post offices had been established at or near ranch headquarters, or on cattle trails. Such locations were usually made in the rough breaks country where surface water and shelter were available. Railroads necessarily followed along the more level uplands. This uprooted most of the earliest villages, even though they had become county seats. New towns grew up along the railroads, and as their population increased, they aspired to become the seats of justice. This led to county seat wars which spread

to almost every county in West Texas during the early period of county organization.¹⁰

County seat elections brought about confusion and disorder, and this made it much more difficult to establish stable regimes in the county governments. Contests not only involved the location of county seats, but they also centered around the building of expensive court houses and land valuations for tax purposes. These struggles were intensified by the fact that they were usually fights between absentee corporations who controlled large tracts of land, and the settlers who wanted to break up the corporations' holdings and pave the way for settlers. In addition to this the settlers wanted the corporations to pay the major portion of taxes necessary for the establishment and maintenance of the new order. These conflicts were often bitter and resulted in much fraud and corruption in the administration of affairs in the newly organized counties. However, issues were not always clearly drawn between these two groups. Often there appeared grafters who were willing to pit one group against the other in order to further their own schemes for extorting large sums of tax money, much of which went into the pockets of crooked promoters.

When Hobart came to the Texas Panhandle county organization was getting well under way. He was intensely interested in these new developments; for he realized that order and stability would have to evolve out of the chaotic conditions prevalent in the country before further developments could be made. Since his Company's lands were scattered over many of the counties in the Panhandle where organization was taking place, Hobart

¹⁰ *The Reeves County Mirror* appealed to the legislature in 1884 to put a stop to fraudulent and illegal county seat elections. This paper mentioned Baird, Abilene, El Paso, and Pecos City as towns that had come to be illegal county seats. Said the *Mirror*, "If Texas and the United States Governments allow these and other illegal county seat elections to stand, and the fraudulent parties to go unpunished, God only knows where it will stop and what will be the ultimate result!" *Reeves County Mirror* as quoted in the *San Angelo Standard*, February 21, 1885. Fondren Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

took a leading part in the organization of the new county governments. At the same time he became greatly disturbed over the turn that events took in the latter part of the Eighties. Hobart wrote Evans in 1889 that,

A deplorable state of affairs exists in Roberts County. The present officers are undoubtedly holding their offices through fraud, and there is some hope that they may be ousted, but in the meantime they are doing all the mischief they can. Their latest move is to let a contract with a New York party for a \$50,000.00 Court House, and it is reported, that they have issued bonds and paid for it in advance. The majority of the citizens of Roberts County are undoubtedly against it, but a set of villians have got possession of the offices for the present and are bent on plundering the County to the last limit. I heard Judge Willis express his indignation in regard to the matter, and he stated that he would issue an injunction if a suitable petition was presented to him, and he further said if the injunction was not respected, he would land the violators in jail and keep them there. . . . The villians have taken every precaution to prevent any injunction from reaching them. The contractor claims that he has received his pay in advance and has given a bond in the sum of \$100,000.00 for the faithful performance of his contract. The Miami people claim that the bonds have passed into the hands of innocent purchasers. The question is can there be any innocent purchasers under the circumstances? I understand that the contractor has just commenced work. . . . This is a question that requires the services of one of the best lawyers in the state if anything is to be accomplished. . . . It is generally understood that the Commissioners Court expect to base the issuance of Court House bonds on the valuation of taxable property in the county and that a few of the settlers in the south part of the county are willing to be raised in order to reach the large corporations and other non-residents. . . . A clique of scoundrels have got into office and there is little hope of justice being meted out since they are preparing to bolster themselves with false affidavits.¹¹

This situation developed into a bitter struggle between the cattle corporations and those who were responsible for handling the county's affairs. The Creswell Land and Cattle Company, whose lands were most affected by the Roberts County fight, tried to enlist the aid of other corporations in an attempt to disorganize some of the Panhandle counties, but Hobart feared that such a policy would antagonize the settlers and would not obtain the best results. He did believe, however, that it was "an outrage for such matters to go unchecked," and that some

¹¹ T. D. Hobart, Mobeetie, Texas, to Ira H. Evans, Austin, Texas, May 16, 1889. Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

measures should be taken to oust the grafters from control of the county's affairs.

The grand jury took up the matter in its annual report in 1889 and gave a detailed discussion to the county's financial and political affairs. The report declared that the county was organized by the fraud of a few persons and without the required number of voters for organization. It contended that no county seat had been chosen in the election held for that purpose, in spite of the fact that Miami had received 111 of the 116 votes cast; since Miami was more than five miles distant from the center of the county, and many of the voters in the election were unqualified.¹² It was estimated that the taxable property of Roberts County would not exceed one million dollars, while the Court had assessed the same at nearly two million dollars. Moreover, the report asserted that "fictitious assessment of values were made against fictitious persons never residing in the county and against fictitious property which under the law was not subject to taxation." Attention was called to the fact that bids for building the court house were published in an "obscure collum of the *Fort Worth Daily Gassett*", a paper not read by the citizens of Roberts County, and that the contract for the building was let without the knowledge or consent of the Commissioners Court. "The contract for a Court House and Jail was conceived in fraud born in iniquity and (is) greatly detrimental to Roberts County," said the grand jury.

Summing up the whole matter your Grand Jury is forced to the conclusion that everything connected with this contract was fraudulent and that said Little, Knight and Nourse and Casserly and Kelley are worthy of the condemnation of the public. We find that a survey made by J. C. English, County Surveyor, under an order of said court was so made as to cut out of the County legal votes which had been cast for Parnell and others and that to do so a large

¹² On April 10, 1879, the Texas legislature passed an act which provided that in the location and removal of county seats a two-thirds vote of the electors would be required for the removal of a county seat to a point more than five miles distant from the geographical center of the county, and that "no person shall be allowed to vote except he be a bona fide citizen of the county in which he offers to vote." Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume VIII, pp. 1384-1386.

territory was attempted to be given to other counties which belonged to Roberts County. . . . Our attention has been called to the many changes in interested newspapers that Roberts County is under the control of foreign syndicates. (We) wish to deny these assertions and to declare that Roberts County is now in the hands of officers elected by the people here actual settlers and citizens. And if the people are persistent to continue the men in the office selected by them, the threatened waste and ruin may yet be evaded the confiscation of property be prevented purity of the ballot box be maintained and the confidence of the people in legal government restored.¹³

The court house scandal in Roberts County was closely connected with a bitter struggle between the cattlemen and the settlers over the location of the county seat. The cattlemen, known as the Kickapoo faction, made a desperate effort to establish the county seat at Parnell in the northern part of the county, while the Diggers made up of the settlers, were determined that Miami should be the location of the county seat. For three years these factions fought each other. The Kickapoos, after a gun display, loaded the safe containing the county records on a wagon and hauled it to Parnell behind a twelve-mule team. An election was held in 1892, and Miami was again favored as the county seat by a large majority. The case was appealed to the courts and Miami was made the legal capitol of Roberts County.¹⁴

Hobart wrote Evans in 1892 that the political affairs in Collingsworth County were in a bad condition; that the recent scandalous sale of school lands had almost driven the citizens to desperation; and that there was talk of trying to oust the county officials. He called attention to the fact that the Commissioners were talking of floating bonds to build a court house, and that they probably would want to build an expensive jail. The Honorable A. J. Marjoribanks, Manager of the Rocking Chair Ranche in Collingsworth County, confirmed Hobart's report when he announced to Edward Marjoribanks of London, England, that plans for the construction of a new court house were under way. The English Manager wrote his brother as follows:

¹³ Minutes, District Court, Miami, Roberts Sounty, Volume I, p. 22.

¹⁴ Judge J. A. Mead, Miami, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, October 29, 1925.

The county judge and the four county commissioners have let a contract for a \$30,000.00 court house to be erected in Wellington: this is of course a huge jobbery scheme, which will help to fill their own pockets: a lumber court house costing \$2500.00 or so would have answered the purpose for many years to come. The whole country is in an uproar over the scheme and are striving to upset it: we ourselves have kept well out of the controversy, having been last year (1890) strictly against the organization of the county, fully knowing that the results would be such as they are now. The above jobbery scheme of course calls for a raise in taxation throughout the county and you may be sure the settlers are not quietly bearing the burden.¹⁵

That Hobart and Marjoribanks were correct in their belief that the settlers were opposed to the building of the new court house was affirmed by the fact that when the plans for the building got well under way, many of the settlers who were opposed to the new and commodious structure, rode from their dugout homes on the ranges to protest in the most emphatic terms. One Mr. Forbis, a "tall, dark complexioned old fellow," representing the settlers, started in to make a rather mild protest against the erection of the costly building. "We and our wives and children are living in dugouts," said Forbis, and the Judge sneered at his remark. With this Forbis straightened himself up and in defiant language addressed the Court in the following words: "If you do build that court house, under each corner of it we will bury the political remains of a county commissioner; under the dome of the building you propose to erect out yonder, we will bury the political remains of our worthy county judge, and we will pile him so deep with brick and mortar that he won't scratch out until the last hour of the resurrection day".¹⁶ Hobart and J. John Drew of the Rocking Chairs appeared before the Commissioners Court on the same day and protested against the "absurd and outrageous evaluations of land."

¹⁵ Mrs. Estelle D. Tinkler, *A History of the Rocking Chair Rancho*, Panhandle-Plains Historical Review, Volume XV, p. 49.

¹⁶ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, June 6, 1934. The first trip Hobart made to Austin after the occurrence of this episode he suggested to the officials of his Company that, on account of the hazardous nature of his occupation, it might be in order to raise his salary. The only satisfaction he got was that he had better take out additional life insurance.

Despite all opposition, however, the Collingsworth County court house was completed in 1892.

Collingsworth County also had its county seat troubles. The first county seat contest was between the Rocking Chair Ranche, whose lands lay in the northern part of the county, and the settlers who were located in the southern portion. The Rockers fought to make Aberdeen the political and judicial center of the county's affairs, while the settlers were opposed to crossing the sandy bed of the North Fork of Red River in order to get to the seat of justice. The Rockers gave way and, after a fight between Wellington and Pearl, Wellington became the permanent county seat.

In the attempts to organize the first counties in Northwest Texas all sorts of schemes and chicanery were used. Before a county could be legally organized it was required to have one hundred fifty qualified voters. Few, if any, of the first counties to be organized could meet this requirement. Therefore, counties petitioning for organization used the names of cowboys who were scattered far and wide over the ranges, and the names of persons travelling through the country, and even fictitious names were used. When a county was ready for organization petition had to be made to the Commissioners Court in the county to which the petitioning county was attached for judicial purposes. In these parent counties the administration of affairs was largely in the hands of the cattlemen who, as a rule, were opposed to organization. This made it much more difficult for the settlers to secure permission to organize the attached counties.

On August 16, 1880, the first petition presented to the Commissioners Court in Wheeler County was for the organization of Oldham County. After some consideration the Court decided that eighty-eight of the petitioners were not legal residents of the county and the petition was overruled.¹⁷ Again on

¹⁷ Minutes, Wheeler County Commissioners Court, Wheeler, Texas, Volume I, p. 49.

August 30, 1880, a second petition was presented to the Wheeler County Commissioners for organization. At a session of the Court on October 12, 1880, it was decided that since there was "a contest existing amongst the citizens of Oldham County relative to its organization" the Court believed that "in justice to all parties concerned" the matter should be referred back to the voters of the county for further consideration, and the petition was again denied.¹⁸ In 1882 the citizens of Donley County petitioned for permission to organize. Protest was made that there were not the one hundred fifty required qualified voters in the county, but after considerable discussion the petition was finally granted.¹⁹ In 1890 a contract was let for a \$28,000 court house.²⁰

When the promoters of the organization of Roberts County filed their petition for organization in 1889 they sounded out the Wheeler County Commissioners on the petition before the court met. They knew that the County Judge was opposed to the organization of other counties and it was found that two of the Commissioners were in agreement with the County Judge on the Roberts County petition, while two of them favored it. In order to prevent the County Judge from voting off the tie against them the petitioners resorted to some questionable diplomacy.

Tom Bailey, one of the Commissioners who was against the organization of Roberts County, lived several miles from Mo-beetie on Sweetwater Creek, and was anxious to sell his place. Milt Hamlin was "dressed up like a millionaire, with a big gold watch and chain, and purported to be from Kansas, and wanted to buy a place." Charlie Rath took Hamlin out to Bailey's place on the day the Wheeler County Commissioners were to meet

¹⁸ Minutes, Wheeler County Commissioners Court, Wheeler, Texas, Volume I, p. 57.

¹⁹ Minutes Commissioners Court, Volume I, pp. 115-116.

²⁰ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, March 15, 1890.

and decide on the organization of Roberts County. When Bailey inquired of Rath who Hamlin was, the latter replied that, "He is some fool from Kansas, or somewhere, with more money than brains." Hamlin immediately made a trade with Bailey and put up a forfeit of fifty dollars. Bailey also wanted to sell his machinery, tools, and equipment, which Hamlin agreed at once to buy. When Bailey insisted that he had to go to court Hamlin protested that he was in a big hurry, and if the deal was consummated it would have to be closed at once. Hobart was present at the session of the Court and noticed the absence of Bailey. He inquired of Temple Houston, who was championing the cause of the petitioners, as to the whereabouts of Bailey. Houston answered Hobart by saying, "Never mind he wont be here, and we are going to run over them with a cavalry charge".²¹ At the session of the Court the petition for the organization of Roberts County was granted and the county's stormy history began.

The organization of counties added greatly to Hobart's duties and difficulties. He was continually meeting with Boards of Equalization in an effort to prevent excessive valuations being placed upon the lands belonging to the Company he represented. One of his greatest difficulties was in the matter of tax discriminations against the New York and Texas Land Company. Hobart had a keen sense of justice and he believed that both the settlers and the corporations should carry their proportionate share of taxation, based upon a fair rate of valuations. He was deeply interested in the development of the country, and he realized that settlers were essential to its progress. On the other hand he felt it incumbent upon himself to protect the best interests of his Company. In meeting Boards of Equalization he contended only that valuation should be determined by the classification of and improvements on lands.

With reference to tax discriminations Hobart wrote Evans:

²¹ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, June 6, 1934.

I will keep a close watch on the different counties in the Panhandle in which our lands are situated and do my best to prevent discrimination against us in regard to the valuation of our land for taxes. . . . The valuations placed on Mr. Dodge's lands this year were fixed so as to accord with the financial necessities rather than based upon a fair market value of the land. There were only 15,000 head of cattle assessed in the county (Childress) and at \$10.00 per head, forty percent less than they would readily sell for while land was assessed at forty percent more than could be gotten for it. . . . Judge Fires suggests that we set in our petition for injunction (with reference to the raising of land values) the fact that the same Board of Equalization shortly after it raised the valuation of our lands recommended that the school sections alternating with our lands be reclassified and the price reduced to \$1.00 per acre. It was reported to me while I was in Childress yesterday that the persons composing the Board of Equalization openly boasted that they would make the nonresidents pay the taxes. . . . In Wheeler County all our lands are valued for purposes of taxation at the same price as the few choice sections owned by the settlers and other parties along the Sweetwater. . . . I see but one way of relief which is in the cutting up of the large ranches into smaller pastures and securing lessees who will become purchasers of State lands. I think the new School Land Law is especially favorable for this kind of work, and as soon as we can secure a sufficient number of land owners in the county we shall have assistance in keeping down valuations.²²

Evans thought such discriminations should be taken to the courts, but Hobart used litigation as a last resort in order not to prejudice settlers further against the large land corporations.

Political organization and adjustments in West Texas were accompanied by a reorganization in the social and economic life of the people. As the population increased changes had to be made that would more adequately meet the varied and complex interests and demands of the people. Property rights had to be determined more definitely; survey lines had to be run more accurately; more fences had to be constructed; new roads had to be marked out; more water had to be provided on the upland plains; homes, schools, churches, and towns had to be built. In short the whole groundwork of a society based primarily upon stock farming had to be developed.

These changes multiplied Hobart's problems. As settlements

²² T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Ira H. Evans, Austin, May 16, 1889; Hobart to Evans, June 19, 1897; Hobart to Evans, December 28, 1897; Hobart to Evans, June 27, 1899. Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

increased it became more difficult to lease large tracts of land, partly because of the opposition of the settlers themselves. The last decade of the century witnessed a drouth and a panic which were accompanied by low cattle prices. Many large cattle companies went broke, and both land sales and land leases were difficult to make: everything pointed to an epoch of smaller land units on the West Texas frontier. Hobart saw clearly the handwriting on the wall, but he realized that the change to the new order must of necessity be slow. He therefore formulated his program to meet the changing needs of the time, and watched with great satisfaction the gradual evolution of his long cherished dream into an actual reality.

The finding of sufficient water for the earliest settlers of the plains was an essential factor in developing this region into stock farms. Hobart gave much study to the solution of this problem in its initial stages. The windmill and the well drill made water potentially available on all lands, and barbed wire made it possible to exclude all lands from the open range. But well making and fencing were expensive and lands were cheap. As long as lands were used exclusively for grazing purposes, Hobart's plan of applying the first year's rentals to fencing and windmills was sufficient, but when it became necessary to divide the lands into smaller tracts, this greatly increased the need for both water and fences, and the cost was prohibitive. Hobart devised a plan of impounding waters along every dry stream bed where he thought it was advisable to build dams. He thought this would enhance the value as well as the utility of lands. Moreover, he joined in with other large concerns, and with the nesters, in the continued search for water, and in experimental agriculture and stock raising.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century hundreds of thousands of dollars, and much human toil, were spent in these experiments in Northwest Texas. Hundreds of small farmers experimented with sorghums and small grain crops,

while many large land concerns turned their attention to experiments on a larger scale in both agriculture and stock raising. The Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company, Limited, better known as the XIT Syndicate, with its 3,000,000 acres of land lying in the ten counties along the western edge of the Texas Panhandle, conducted large scale scientific experiments in cattle breeding, agriculture, and horticulture, and contributed much toward the success of these industries in the Southwest. Hobart watched these experiments with studied interest, and when they proved to be successful, he collected scores of testimonials from pioneer plains stock farmers which he later used in advertising West Texas lands to the people of the outside world.

By the opening of the twentieth century institutional patterns in West Texas had taken definite and permanent shape. Most of the counties were organized and law and order were established. Stock farming was the order of the day in Northwest Texas and was in successful operation. This region had been penetrated by five railroads, four of which pointed toward the farther Southwest. Land agents, immigration societies, newspapers, land corporations, and railroads vied with each other in proclaiming this region as a land rich in promise for homeseekers and stock farmers. More than a decade earlier *The Tascosa Pioneer* had read correctly the trend of the times, and announced through its columns that,

What the Panhandle wants to bring to its highest consummation are stock farmers—a stockman and farmer to every section of its land. It will be no cotton country. But with thousands of farmers that grow grain and grasses for the support of stock and grow stock for the consumption of farm products; then and only then will we see our land blooming forth into the happiest, the most prosperous, the richest section north, south, east, or west. For that is a utilization of means to an end which brings the surest and fullest degree of independence attainable in agriculture, business or aught else. That quality of population will be at once the Panhandle's glory and its strength.²³

²³ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, October 15, 1887. Files Panhandle-Plains Historical Society Museum, Canyon.

The nineteenth century ends an epoch in the history of West Texas. With her institutional foundations firmly established, and with the forces of the industrial revolution—railroads, the telephone, and the telegraph—pushing their way into the Southwest, the early years of the twentieth century were to experience a period of growth and development in this region unparalleled in the history of the American frontier.

In two decades Hobart had taken part in three stages of development in the Southwest. First was the transition from the open range to the enclosure of large tracts of land by cattle companies. This change was accompanied by large scale investments in both land and cattle by eastern and foreign capitalists. Following closely came the nesters who began to settle on the state's public domain and contest the cattlemen's right to free grass. Finally there was the period of county organization which gave stability to the political, social, and economic order on the Texas plains. Hobart's years of experience had thoroughly convinced him of the potential agricultural value of West Texas lands, and he soon began to formulate plans that would induce more settlers to come to the Southwest.

The corporations had served their day and most of them were fast disposing of their lands. Increased overhead and the intense competition on the cattle ranges made the production of meat alone by the corporations less profitable. Moreover, the increasing demands for agricultural lands enhanced their value, and the corporations turned to the safer and more profitable venture of transferring their pasture lands into stock farms. At the same time they were cashing in on their investments by selling their lands to farmers on long terms and at a comparatively low rate of interest. Corporations had set in motion the forces that were to transform West Texas into a land of prosperous stock farmers. With this another frontier was to be settled and a new social and economic order was to be developed.

THE COMING OF SETTLERS

IT HAS BEEN shown in a previous chapter that there were few people west of the one hundredth meridian in Texas in 1880. The estimated three thousand Anglo-Americans in this region consisted largely of cattlemen, buffalo hunters, bull whackers, soldiers, and a few outlaws. The Land Act of 1883 gave some encouragement to settlers in the public domain, but it was the Act of 1887 that guaranteed homes for settlers on the remaining state lands, and both population statistics and county organization show that immediately after this date more people began to move across the one hundredth meridian.

Hobart in his numerous letters during the years from 1887 to 1889 frequently called attention to the fact that the counties in the eastern portion of the Panhandle were being settled rapidly. *The Tascosa Pioneer* chronicled the arrival of settlers almost every week in its issues during the same period. "There are said to be a great many people already gathering in wagons, tents, and dugouts, all over the school sections of Potter and Carson counties," said the editor of the *Pioneer* in the issue of June 18, 1887, "and", he continued, "some of them will doubtless stick, some will not. But the year '88 will have to show up definitely something of the capabilities of the plains." In the issue of June 9, 1888, the *Pioneer* announced that, "wagons with white tops, rope-bottomed chairs, towheads, brindle cows, yellow dogs, and a pervading air of restlessness have poured through this week in the direction suggested by Horace Greeley." With the formation of a local immigration association at Tascosa in 1888, the *Pioneer* continued its discussions regularly about the growing population in the Panhandle.

The sparsely settled region west of the one hundredth meridian at this time comprised a vast area, and its boundaries reached far beyond the confines of Texas. Colonel Charles

Goodnight, in his "Recollections", gives an impressive description of this region in 1876. "To give you some idea of the days referred to in this letter meaning the period when I first settled here (1876)," he wrote, "there was not a permanent settlement aside from Fort Elliott from here north to the Arkansas River, west to New Mexico, south to the Rio Grande, or east to the Western Cross Timbers of this state. Now in this great wilderness there was a vast number of outlaws passing to and fro as well as Indians. In fact they were more dangerous than the Indians".¹

Mr. J. C. Paul, one of the earliest settlers in the Texas Panhandle, records in his Memoirs that, "The first time that I was ever in Texas was in 1880. I came to Wolf Creek in the Panhandle. . . . They quarantined us with our herd because of Texas fever. Tanner had planned to drive to Cheyenne but they held us up beyond Dodge City (Kansas) and would not let us through until December 1st. . . . We held our cattle on the south side of the Arkansas River about thirteen miles from Dodge. There were mule skinnners, bull whackers, gamblers, and buffalo hunters were in the minority. Cowboys, bull whackers, and soldiers were in the majority in Dodge".²

Previous to 1880 there had been a number of Mexican settlements along the Canadian River in the western Texas Panhandle. "Mexican villages were numerous," said Frank Mitchell of the Matadors. "About three hundred Mexicans lived on Pescada (Fish) Creek. . . . They claimed the range from Tascosa to India Creek. Of course they were just squatters but they had been there for years and years, and it was the hardest thing in the world for them to understand how title could be acquired to land. Old Don Julian Gonzales caused more trouble than any of them. There were also the Salinas and the Charves (Chaves?) Plazas on the Canadian. After the

¹ Col. Charles Goodnight, "Recollections", MS, Files Panhandle-Plains Museum.

² J. C. Paul, "Early Days in Carson County, Texas," MS, Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

Mexicans left these plazas were torn down and destroyed".³ Records are not available to determine when these Mexican settlements were made. There are a few Mexican families yet living in this section, and there is still abundant physical evidence to show that at one time a considerable element of Mexican people have inhabited this region, and that they had been here perhaps for some time. The columns of the *Tascosa Pioneer* have much to say about the Mexican population that lingered at Tascosa as long as that old town was in existence.

When the Anglo-American settlers came into West Texas much of the choicest watered lands along the surface streams had been occupied by the cattlemen. This forced the settlers out onto the upland prairies where there was neither water, shelter, nor timber. However, the settlers did not hesitate on this account. They chartered a railroad box car and loaded their household goods, including a team and a cow or two, and shipped them to the point on the railroad nearest their destination: or they loaded their entire earthly possessions on a wagon or two, drove along a few stock, and went straight to the land upon which file had been made to establish their new homes. They settled of necessity in widely scattered places; usually on the bald, bare prairies, without available water, and with no materials at hand for building purposes. J. C. Paul vividly described a typical plains scene in 1888 in the following words: "It was a beautiful, smooth prairie as far as the eye could see, not a tree, not even a shrub knee high, to hide a jackrabbit, for miles in every direction. No fences, no roads, no houses, only a handful of people around Panhandle, the only settlement then in all that plains country".⁴ There was some opposition to these first settlers by the cattlemen, but they were usually welcomed

³ H. F. Mitchell, Amarillo, Texas, to Evelyn Hood, March 26 and November 15, 1933. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon; J. M. Wise, Tucumcari, New Mexico, to L. F. Sheffy, July, 1934.

⁴ J. C. Paul, "Early Days in Carson County, Texas".

because they produced much needed forage crops on an overcrowded range; and because they broke the monotony of life on the plains by introducing more families, and especially more eligible girls for the cowboy bachelors of the cattle kingdom.

The first temporary homes of the settlers consisted of tents, or sometimes the wagon bed was set off the running gears of the wagon onto the ground, and this served for living quarters until more permanent quarters could be provided. The first permanent homes of the settlers were dugouts. These were of various and sundry types, depending upon their location and the materials at hand for their construction. Some were full dugouts, other half-dugouts, while still others were picket and sod houses dug back into the wall of a small canyon. Half-dugouts were dug half way into the ground and covered with a frame structure. The full dugout was excavated out of the ground entirely, and covered with poles and sod at the ground level, with only one opening for entrance and exit. The following is a splendid description of one of the more durable and comfortable types of these prairie homes of the early settlers:

It was located three miles southwest of LeFors. The home originally consisted of one room, ten by twelve feet; later six similar rooms were added. The first room had a dirt floor, dirt walls, and a dirt roof. The walls were later canvassed with gunny sacks and papered with old newspapers. Each room was constructed with a large ridgepole of cottonwood placed along the top after the main room had been dug out in the side of a hill. To this ridgepole the rafters of smaller cottonwood logs were attached; then small willow branches were tied at right angles to the rafters; then a layer of bear-grass (yucca plant) placed over the willows; and finally about eighteen inches or two feet of dirt was laid upon the beargrass. This made a roof that never leaked. A chimney was made in the back end of the room by digging the fireplace back into the dirt wall and boring a hole with a post auger to let out the smoke—some rock walls being built at the top of the chimney⁵

The dugout was the first solution of the building problem of the Anglo-American settlers on the plains. "It was, in some ways, superior to the houses now. It was always cool in sum-

⁵ H. B. Lovett, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, July 23, 1934.

mer and warm in winter," said Mrs. J. W. Kelley of Higgins.⁶ Although it was hard to keep clean and was of the earthy, yet it furnished considerable comfort, and even luxury, for the first women settlers of the plains. The dugout became an institution of the plains. It inaugurated a new era in the settlement of West Texas, and was an important factor in laying the foundations for an Anglo-American culture in this region. As the settlers gradually vacated their dugout homes they were supplanted by a small frame structure which usually stood in front of the dugout entrance. When this building was enlarged, a leanto or shed room was added, and for years these small shacks were the architectural pattern for the homes of the plains people.

A companion institution of the dugout on the plains was the water barrel. When the first plains settlers arrived windmills were just being introduced and water was not immediately available for the dugout homes on the upland plains. It had to be hauled from some distant stream or well. J. C. Paul recalled how on Saturdays in 1888, "all the town people scanned the horizons in different directions to catch glimpses of the twenty or thirty water wagons that made weekly visits. This condition lasted for several years, until it became known that water was to be found in abundance everywhere, by drilling for it".⁷ A few wells were dug; others were bored, and on each a hand pump was installed to provide water until funds could be secured for the erection of a windmill and other improvements.

With these dugout homes and small shacks the first settlers of the plains, with little or no money, and with the most meager equipment, began the work of building an Anglo-American civilization on the plains of West Texas. Theirs was the age

⁶ Mrs. J. W. Kelley, Higgins, Texas, to Miss Carolyn Peterson, July 28, 1935.

⁷ J. C. Paul, "Early Days in Carson County, Texas".

of the horse and wagon, the walking plow, the oil lamp, Arbuckle's coffee, Pinkney's bitters, Doan's liver and kidney pills, and Hood's sarsaparilla. These early settlers built their first homes and dug the first wealth out of the soil of the plains. This period was never noted for the volume of wealth it produced, but it was highly significant in that it was the beginning of a great experimental period of agriculture and stock raising. Theirs was truly a civilization of the grass roots, but within two decades their institutions were as firmly fixed in the soil of the plains as were the grass roots themselves.

The first plains settlers lived in an isolated world. There were few contacts between West Texas and its surrounding regions. This isolation was intensified by the vast distances and by the solitude of the plains. The isolated, far-reaching plains had a powerful and compelling influence upon all those it held within its physical embraces. Long before settlements were made travellers and scouts had felt the powerful silences of the plains. John R. Cook, a buffalo hunter and scout, gives a vivid description of the *silences* of the plains. After a long, hard day's ride over the plains evading Indians in 1874, he wrote: "As darkness spread its canopy over the plain, not a breath of air seemed to be stirring, and the stars were shining brightly. Unsaddling our horses, we placed the saddles cantle to cantle and spread a blanket upon the ground. We could not help but note the silence. . . . After our horses had finished grazing both lay down some fifty feet from us. When our conversation had ceased for a time the utmost stillness and silence prevailed. The buffaloes were nowhere in this vast solitude. We were so far from water that even the birds were not here, and Carr remarked that the *very stillness* was noisy".⁸

Captain R. G. Carter dramatically portrays the almost breathless silence of the plains in recording an account of a

⁸ John R. Cook, *The Border and the Buffalo*, p. 256.

cavalry train, moving across the Panhandle prairies at night in 1874, in a scouting expedition after Indians. "Orders were given for the 2nd Battalion to mount and move out," he wrote. "The moon was full. It was a wierd sight—this long, dark column of mounted men moving almost silently over the thick, short buffalo grass, which deadened all sounds, not a word being spoken, expecting every minute to come upon the enemy".⁹ The vast distances of the plains was aptly described by Mrs. Mollie Luttrell, one of the early settlers in Armstrong County, in the following terse but telling sentence: "I could see for miles and miles and could not see a thing."

These "silences" and "distances" were a part of the daily experiences of the early plains settlers. Homes were from two or three miles to fifteen and twenty miles apart. They were joined by rough ruts or dim trails that were little travelled. Isolation and distance prevented contacts of early settlers, except in the rarest instances. Families lived much unto themselves, and at times, loneliness and isolation gripped them in a powerful and mysterious way. He who has never heard that familiar rattle of the wagon, as it lumbered over the rough ruts of the prairies in the still, reverberant atmosphere of an autumn evening, joyously announcing the arrival of members of the family after several days absence, has missed much of the spirit of the plains in these early days.

Travel was slow and difficult. The main highways of travel, wagon ruts cut deep into the sod turf, were always bumpy; sometimes boggy. These roads were used mostly by freighters who hauled a gradually increasing volume of supplies to the villages and ranches scattered over the vast area of the Southwest. In the earliest freighting days two main freight trails penetrated the region. One led from Gainesville to Fort Worth, and on to Fort Griffin in Shackelford County; thence to Fort

⁹ Captain R. G. Carter, *On The Border With Mackenzie*, p. 484.



Immigrant Wagons Enroute to the Southwest

Concho, where San Angelo now stands; and from there to Fort Stockton in the Pecos country. The other followed the Dodge (Kansas) Trail to Mobeetie, in Wheeler County; went on to Tascosa in Oldham County; and on to Springer and Las Vegas in New Mexico. A freight trail also connected Mobeetie and the changing termini of the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad as it was extended westward in the latter Eighties. During this period all trails in the Llano Estacado converged at Fort Griffin and Mobeetie.

When the railroads built into West Texas both the freight trails and the distribution centers shifted. When the Texas and Pacific was completed across Central West Texas in 1882, Colorado City, Sweetwater, Big Spring, and Pecos City became the trade centers for the southern Llano Estacado region. In the northern Llano Estacado, Amarillo was located at the intersection of the Fort Worth and Denver and the Southern Kansas railroads. In 1889 enterprising citizens of Amarillo and Roswell, New Mexico, got together and discussed the trade possibilities between the two towns. As a result of this meeting Amarillo citizens hired a crew of men who, under the supervision of a surveyor, one Mr. Wills, plowed a furrow between the two towns. Freighters straddled the furrow and cut out a freight trail between Amarillo and Roswell.¹⁰ A few months previous to this time Colonel R. P. Smythe, an early plains surveyor, J. H. Bryan, and C. L. Carter, tied a barbed wire to the back of a wagon and cut out a freight trail from Plainview to Amarillo.¹¹

For more than a quarter of a century scores of long ox trains,

¹⁰ G. A. F. Parker, Hereford, Texas, *Memoirs*, Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

¹¹ J. H. Bell, Plainview, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, March 4, 1927; Siler Faulkner, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 9, 1934. It is interesting to note that Amarillo was the only distribution center in the northern Llano Estacado after 1888. The rough breaks country extending from the head of the Palo Duro Canyon along the eastern side of the Panhandle-Plains area, and the similar broken country along the Canadian river, made Amarillo the only practical outlet toward the Southwest. The railroads from Amarillo toward the Southwest followed along these old freight trails.

and hundreds of freight outfits¹² drawn by mule and horse teams, drug their heavy loads over the far-reaching freight trails of the Southwest. As the population increased the freighting business grew to almost huge proportions; and it furnished years of hard work for hundreds of bull whackers and mule skinners who cracked their long whips over the heads of thousands of tired animals as they pressed their sore, sweaty shoulders against the heavily-loaded wagons in their long and ceaseless toil.

The freighting business produced a number of business institutions which were a vital part of West Texas and many parts of the Southwest in this formative period of development. These institutions furnished the capital, the credit, the direction, and much of the motive force which were necessary for the operation of a business of such large proportions. The firm of Rath and Hamburg at Mobeetie, Rath and Conrad at Fort Griffin, Cone and Duran at Tascosa, Burns Walker and Company at Amarillo and Colorado City, Nobles Brothers at Amarillo, Pipkin, Donaldson, Oldham, and Stroud at Canyon City, and scores of other business concerns kept supplies flowing into the new channels of trade in constantly increasing volume.

The annual business of many of these firms ran into the six figures, and the annual sum total of business reached into the millions. *The Tascosa Pioneer* declared that in Tascosa a third of a million dollars changed hands in 1886,¹³ and assured its readers in 1887 that the total trade for the year would amount

¹² A freight outfit consisted of from two to eight teams, two abreast, strung along a chain fastened to the front axle and to the tongue of the front wagon; two, three, and sometimes four wagons being trailed together. These teams were driven by means of a "jerk line". This was a single line fastened to the bridle bit of the left animal in the lead team. A steady pull on the line by the driver, who rode the rear animal on the left side of the wagon tongue, would swing the entire string of teams to the left, while by means of a series of slight jerks on the line, the outfit could be swung to the right as far and as sharply as might be desired. Often the string of teams had to be swung sharply to the left or to the right in getting out of bog holes, in order to have all teams pulling together by the time the outfit was straightened out. Both the driver and the lead animal became skilled at this business.

¹³ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, July 10, 1886.

to \$200,000.00 or \$300,000.00.¹⁴ A \$100,000.00 annual business for Rath and Hamburg at Mobeetie was generally conceded to be a conservative figure in the heyday of that business enterprise. The mercantile business of Pipkin, Donaldson, Oldham and Stroud, with a capital of \$9,000.00, did more than \$100,000.00 worth of business annually.¹⁵ The Rockwell Brothers Lumber Company,¹⁶ Maddrey and Kenyon's Coal and Feed Supply Store, Stringfellow and Hume's wholesale hardware and implement company, all of Amarillo and Canyon, kept pace with other business concerns in furnishing goods and supplies for the ranchers and stock farmers of the Southwest. Gerlach Brothers operated a general merchandise store at the temporary terminus of the Southern Kansas Railroad on the Canadian River in 1887-1888. They specialized in "Bacon, Beans, Axle Grease, Grains, Overalls, and Shirts",¹⁷ and sold thousands of dollars worth of goods to railroad workers, freighters, and cattlemen of the region.¹⁸ Doan's Store, located on the Western Cattle Trail in Wilbarger thought it nothing unusual to sell \$1200 worth of goods in one day.¹⁹ These concerns not only furnished the goods and supplies; but they were also the bankers for the people of the plains during these busy building days.

Closely connected with the freight outfits and the freight trails was the stage coach. Early mail lines followed along every freight trail and distributed news from the outside world at regular periodic intervals; usually two or three times each week. The "mail hack", drawn by four galloping little mules, all abreast, as it rocked along over the chuggy ruts, furnished a

¹⁴ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, April 13, 1887.

¹⁵ George H. Oldham, Canyon, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, April 22, 1933.

¹⁶ This firm is in operation today and is known as the Burrow Lumber Company. C. R. Burrow, like many other young men, came to West Texas and grew up with the business, and took it over after its founders had passed on.

¹⁷ See photograph, Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon, Texas.

¹⁸ George Gerlach, Canadian, Texas, to Mrs. Billy Dixon, November 9, 1922. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

¹⁹ C. F. Doan, Doan's Store, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, October 8, 1926. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

rough and novel means of transportation for travellers into this newly developed region. These hacks, loaded to the guard with their human cargoes of from nine to twelve passengers, and with bag and baggage strapped into every available space, ran in relays over the plains region travelling from seventy-five to one hundred miles per day. Stage stands dotted the plains along the routes of travel, and hundreds of men found occupation in driving and handling the thousands of small, but powerful little wild mules required to handle this immense volume of traffic. As the railroads built into the country, with their branch lines, the freight and stage line trails were gradually shortened, and finally gave way entirely to the new and changing order.

But these ant-like movements along the freight trails and around the busy marts of trade were but an indication of what was taking place back stage in the main theater of action. While business concerns and freight outfits were busy hauling and distributing supplies, the increasing thousands of farmers, together with large land corporations, were experimenting in the great laboratory of nature in the Southwest. They were digging into the soil and experimenting with all kinds of small grain crops, cotton, vegetables, melons, fruits, trees, and stock.

With the coming of the railroads the earliest settlers went scurrying over the West Texas plains gathering up the hundreds of tons of bison and cattle bones that lay bleaching on the prairies after the buffalo slaughter of the previous decade, and after the big die-up of cattle in the winter of 1885-1886. *The Tascosa Pioneer*, in the issue of October 15, 1887, announced that, "since railroads are penetrating the Panhandle a new industry will spring up and assume surprising dimensions, and there will be millions in it. Bones! Reports have it that in various quarters tons on tons of them are being gathered for an early sale." Bones furnished the first by-industry for the early plains settlers, and their sale at from \$6.00 to \$8.00 per ton, brought

much needed cash to the new comers to tide them over their first winters on the Texas plains. Hundreds of tons of bones were ricked along the railroad sidings, just as buffalo hides had been in the previous decade, to be shipped to the East and to be used as fertilizer and for refining processes.²⁰

Nature threw many obstacles in the way of the first Anglo-American settlers on the West Texas plains. They had scarcely settled before they faced a series of years of drouth.²¹ In a region where vegetation is scanty, and where persistent and predatory animals are comparatively abundant, such conditions whet both the wits and the appetites of the natural life that inhabits such a region. Animals and birds become bolder and more sly and cunning in their struggles with man for the posession and control of nature's food supply. Moreover, from the settlers' standpoint, the fewness of people settled in widely scattered parts of the country, greatly increased the difficulty in overcoming such obstacles. In addition to this, where cheap lands are abundant, and where the soil produces only scant returns after hard toil, improvements are made slowly and land values increase less rapidly. Therefore, after a series of crop failures, and after several years of what appeared to be an unsuccessful struggle with the wild life on the West Texas plains, many of the first settlers became discouraged and left.

As a result much land was forfeited to the state. Since cheap lands were abundant not only in West Texas, but also in the Territories of Oklahoma and New Mexico adjacent to West Texas, the settlers who remained did not think it worth while to redeem these forfeited lands. Therefore, when the Cherokee Strip was opened for settlement in 1893, many of the settlers

²⁰ G. N. Jowell, Hereford, Texas, to Jack Jarrel, June 26, 1937; J. C. Paul, "Early Days in Carson County, Texas"; Mrs. Arthur Duncan, Floydada, Texas, *Memoirs*, M.S. Files Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon.

²¹ The average annual rainfall in West Texas for the years 1890-1894 inclusive was 16.2 inches, while the average for the five succeeding years, 1895 to 1899 inclusive, was 23.5 inches. See *Climate Summaries*, United States Weather Bureau for 1932; also weather records kept at Fort Elliott, 1882 to 1890. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

in West Texas abandoned their claims, and drifted into Oklahoma. J. C. Paul recalled years afterwards that, "The year the Indian Territory was opened up lots of our settlers got up and left. That year thirteen men who had filed on sections of land deeded their land to me. I forfeited them all. I kept them eight or ten years and then didn't want them. I didn't want to stay there, but couldn't get away. We didn't have as many people here after eight or ten years as we did at first".²²

One of the greatest obstacles to successful settlement during the latter nineteenth century was the obstinate and destructive predatory animal life on the West Texas plains. Of all predatory animals on the plains at that time the prairie dog perhaps headed the list. The millions²³ of prairie dogs that inhabited the region not only destroyed thousands of square miles of grass and made the lands unfit for use, but in times of excessive drouth these animals would travel two and three miles at night from their populous towns and clean up acres of tender growing crops sprouted by the spring showers. These animals were prolific, their towns spread rapidly, and their countless numbers made it next to impossible for isolated farmers to combat them successfully. Moreover, coyotes made destructive nightly raids on poultry houses. They preyed upon the sheep and often killed young calves on the ranges. In addition jackrabbits became almost tame when vegetation was scarce and played havoc with

²² J. C. Paul, Panhandle, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, July 13, 1926. A study of population statistics during the three decades from 1880 to 1910 reveals the effects of drouth conditions upon settlements in West Texas. During the decade from 1880 to 1890 the population in West Texas increased seven times over, while in the following decade it only doubled. In the first decade of the twentieth century the population increased four times over. See *United States Census Reports* for 1880 and 1940.

²³ Vernon Bailey estimates that a prairie dog town between Clarendon and San Angelo covered 25,000 square miles and contained 400,000,000 prairie dogs. He estimates that at that time (1901) there were 800,000,000 prairie dogs in Texas and states that they would require as much grass as 3,125,000 head of cattle. See Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains*, p. 39. Richard Irving Dodge says that the hunter rarely finds him far from his hole, "and must bag him with a quick shot as he scuttles away to that safe refuge . . . he is exceedingly prolific, each female bringing several sets of young each year . . . He is a machine designed by nature to convert grass into flesh . . . He is found in almost every section of the open prairie, though he prefers dry and arid to moist and rich localities." See Richard Irving Dodge, *Hunting Grounds of the Great West* p. 211.

growing crops. Records of the minutes of the Commissioners Courts in all of the West Texas counties show that the most common item of expenditure was for coyote scalps or hides, and for jackrabbit ears. The sum total of expenditures for this purpose would run into the thousands of dollars annually. If perchance the farmer produced small grain crops, migratory birds flocked to the small fields and destroyed the entire crop almost over night while it was in the shock. Chicken hawks in their hunger defied the poorly-aimed weapons of the plains farmers and swooped down with unerring accuracy to pick their precious prey out of the very poultry yards of these widely scattered homes. In times of drouth the plains farmers were beset on every hand with destructive predatory animals, varmints, and vultures.

During periods of drouth fire hazards were greatly increased. Prairie fires, driven by strong westerly spring winds, often made wide sweeps over the West Texas plains and destroyed everything in their paths. Frequently small ricks of fodder, used both for shelter and for feed for stock to tide them over until the green grasses grew, were sent up in billowy smoke. These fires were often caused by defective flues which sucked burning sparks out onto the dry roofs of the lightly constructed homes and sent them up in flying flames. The barren, blackened prairies left in the wake of these destructive fires presented scenes of monotony and desolation that can better be portrayed by the artist's brush than with the writer's pen.

The drouth years from 1890 to 1894 were accompanied by a scourge of grasshoppers. Great clouds of these pests suddenly appeared just at the growing season in 1893 and cleaned up everything in their path. They destroyed gardens, crops, grass, and even harness. Those who witnessed this great scourge give vivid descriptions of the destruction wrought. "They cleaned the pastures and fields over which they passed until they were as bare as a floor. They ate harness, coats, or anything that was

left outside," said J. L. Francis of Briscoe County. N. M. Akeson of Hale County added that they "moved in strips, and ate everything as they went. I recall that I was riding to the post office one day and had several letters in my pocket. I got down to open a gate, and in doing so, dropped the letters from my pocket. I rode on for a mile or two before I missed the letters, and by the time I got back to the gate where I had lost them, grasshoppers had eaten holes through the letters and they had to be re-written." Mrs. Fred Scott, a pioneer resident of Swisher County, declared that, "When the grasshoppers swarmed they went toward the southwest, and there were such great numbers of them that they obscured the sun".²⁴ These were years of acid test for the early plains settlers, and many of them were unable to survive the trying times.

But it was not always so. If at times Nature was harsh and sparing, in the more frequent years of normal rainfall she gave forth freely and in great abundance. Along almost every sandy stream bed, and in every canyon luscious fruits, such as grapes, plums, and berries grew in profusion. In the rough breaks country along the eastern Llano Estacado timber grew in sufficient quantities to furnish posts and firewood for the early plains settlers. Fruits and firewood were the common property of all and could be had for the taking. Posts could be had at a nominal price. If money was lacking to pay for posts, a horse or a yearling calf could be substituted; even a man's credit was good. There was much bartering and credit done during these early days. If firewood was lacking, then cattle came to the rescue by eating the nutritious grasses and transforming them into both flesh and firewood. The annual "plum hunts" were red letter days in the life of these early settlers. They served as an excellent outing and camping trip for two or three neighboring families, and they usually yielded sufficient jams and jellies

²⁴ J. L. Francis, Silverton, Texas, to Mrs. A. L. Redin, June 14, 1936; N. M. Akeson, Hale Center, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 19, 1934; Mrs. Fred Scott, Canyon, Texas, Memoirs, 1934. Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon.

to satisfy the sweet tooth of every member of the family during the winter months.

Isolation and distances welded society together over wide areas. Physicians travelled for fifty and sixty miles, often at night with nothing to guide them but the North Star to minister to the sick. Itinerant ministers of the gospel went about continually organizing churches and Sunday Schools, and otherwise looking after the spiritual needs of the people. Camp meetings were outstanding events in the life of the people. They travelled for long distances, and camped for two and three weeks at a time to attend them. These meetings went far toward satisfying both the spiritual longings and the social inclinations of the people. Celebrations on the Fourth of July, and at Christmas tide, and even meetings of the District Court, were great social events in the life of the people. Common problems, common hardships, common joys, and common sufferings knit society together into large territorial units.

Physical environment and its influences made these early plainsmen a determined and a resourceful people, and united them in all of their undertakings. Society judged a person not so much by who he was as by what he could do. There were no political factions and religious lines were not distinctly drawn. Men were chosen to places of leadership because of fitness for service rather than because of any creed or party platform. Such leaders of necessity had to be resourceful and versatile in order to meet the varying needs of growing frontier communities. The name of one Pete Leithauser appears a number of times in the memoirs of these early plainsmen, and he is typical of the resourcefulness of the average citizen in the small West Texas villages of his day.

Pete was a carpenter at the little village of Panhandle City who later took up the business of plumbing. When an undertaker became necessary he made boxes and buried the dead. He next added barbering to his trade, and finally ordered a pair

of Sears-Roebuck forceps and began to "pull teeth". Pete was elected Justice of the Peace, and though he was not versed in the law, he took the oath of office and entered upon his duties seriously. His first legal acknowledgment was made before J. N. Freeman and J. C. Paul, and the oath he administered was couched in the following words. "Do you fellows both solemnly swear that what you wrote in that paper is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you by God?"²⁵ These plains folk were an honest and industrious people who knew little about the intricacies of law and government, but they knew how to apply their rudimentary principles among a frontier people.

Through an accumulation of years in dealing with plains problems and in experimentation the plainsmen saw increasing evidence of the capabilities of the plains soil. By the end of the century abundant crops, small herds of good cattle, contented homes, schools, churches, and thriving villages gave evidence on every hand that the first period of experimentation in stock farming was a success beyond peradventure of doubt. Anglo-American institutions had taken root in the soil of the plains. When the inventory was taken at the turn of the century and the books were balanced, the assets of the experiment far overbalanced the losses and liabilities. These assets when measured in terms of material wealth were not great, but they were amply sufficient to prove the potentialities of the plains soil. The importance of these assets lay in the fact that they were to serve as evidence and as a back log for future homeseekers who sought to acquire the last cheap lands on the American frontier.

The work and achievement of the earliest Anglo-American settlers in West Texas cannot be measured altogether in terms of physical and material things, but rather in the more permanent human and spiritual values. These early plainsmen were not an educated people when judged by books and literary

²⁵ J. C. Paul, "Early Days in Carson County, Texas".

standards, but they were thoroughly grounded in the more practical school of hard experience. Their resourcefulness and their capabilities reached maturity in the generation of people they produced. The following testimonial tells a short but significant story of the early Anglo-American's contribution to the cultural life on the West Texas plains:

I come here first twenty-one years ago. There wasn't anything to come for, but I come. I had an old wagon, an' my team was an onery mule and a flea-bitten ol' gray mare. All I had was in that wagon. There was five children an' my woman, an' they was all sick. I've got now three hundred and twenty acres of good land, all improved. My sons growed up an' one's a doctor, one's a lawyer, an' another's a farmer with a farm as good as mine. One daughter's a teacher an' the other's a farmer's wife. In all the time I been here I haven't bought a bushel of grain ner a pound o' meat ner paid ary single doctor's bill.²⁶

By 1903 the work of clearing the West Texas wilderness for colonization was completed. Anglo-American institutional patterns were established. Land corporations turned away from the large cattle concerns and began to parcel their lands out to stock farmers and small ranchmen. Five railroads traversed the West Texas plains and four of them pointed toward the Pacific coast by way of the southern route. Now that stock farming was a proven success, corporations threw their power and influence behind the tide of immigration that was beginning to surge toward this last American frontier. Every indication pointed to the beginning of a new era in the development of Texas and the farther Southwest.

²⁶ *The Earth*, Volume I, p. 8, March, 1904. *The Earth* was published for the purpose of advertising cheap lands of the Southwest.

FAMOUS TOWNS OF EARLY DAYS

ONE OF THE most important factors in the conquest and occupation of the Southern plains was the fort. Forts were used as bases of operation in carrying on military campaigns against the Indians. Numerous forts were established in Texas during the period from 1836 to 1876, and they were gradually moved westward ahead of the settlements. By 1875 a line of forts encircled the Southern Plains region, with each fort a link in the chain. Beginning at Fort Dodge, Kansas, this line of forts was extended to Fort Cobb and Fort Sill in the Indian Territory, and on to Fort Griffin in Shackelford County, Texas; to Fort Concho where San Angelo now stands; to Fort Stockton in the Pecos country, and from there the chain was linked to Fort Bliss at El Paso. On the western side were Fort Stanton, Fort Sumner, Fort Union, and Fort Bascom in New Mexico, and Fort Lyon and Fort Hays in Kansas. These forts served as sentinels against marauding Indian expeditions on the one hand, and as a vanguard for settlements on the other. As the forts were gradually moved toward the north and west in Texas the Indians were squeezed into the closing vise, and they finally had to find refuge on the reservations in the Indian Territory and in the Territory of New Mexico.

The last fort established in Texas was Fort Elliott. This fort was located near the head of Sweetwater Creek, in Wheeler County. The site for the fort was selected by Major Henry C. Bankhead and his command on June 1, 1875, soon after the close of the last Indian campaigns in West Texas.¹ Major Bankhead, with a detachment of soldiers from Fort Sill, Indian Territory, had been camped for some months previous to this time on the North Fork of Red River a few miles west of this point.²

¹ Adjutant General's Office, War Department, Washington, D. C., to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas. (Date not legible). Hobart Letter Files.

² W. S. Mabry, "The Location of Fort Elliott", *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* V, p. 87.

Fort Elliott, like all other forts in West Texas, served its dual purpose: it kept the Indians quiet on the reservations while the buffalo slaughter was being completed in West Texas, and at the same time it beckoned the Anglo-Americans across the 100th meridian. Fort Elliott had scarcely been established when it became the center of the rapidly expanding cattle industry in Northwest Texas. Scores of ranches were established on the open range in West Texas between 1876, when the JA Ranch was located, and 1886 when the XIT range was fenced. The fort, set in the midst of this great cattle range, presented a unique and imposing spectacle. It was situated on a high elevation in a horseshoe bend of Sweetwater Creek, with the front of the shoe lying toward the southwest.

In 1877 the United States Government leased sections 36, 46, 56, and 66, Block A-5, H & G N Survey, from the Texas Land Company which, in 1880, came to be known as the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited. The Government also leased the four alternate adjoining school sections, 37, 45, 55, and 67, Block A-5, from the state of Texas. In 1880 the Government, in order to keep control of the head of Sweetwater Creek, leased section 87 in the same block from the state of Texas. All these leases expired on December 31, 1889, but the Government retained the option of purchasing these lands at \$3.00 per acre at any time prior to 1889.

Fort Elliott was located according to the Nelson surveys of 1873. Soon after the fort was located some forty or fifty settlements were made along Sweetwater Creek. These were also made according to the Nelson surveys. As a result of the inaccuracy of the Nelson surveys, plus the fact that they were never completed, much confusion as to land boundaries developed. Consequently on April 2, 1887, the Texas legislature approved an act authorizing the re-survey of lands surrounding Fort Elliott in order to clear land titles. In accordance with this act Governor Ross appointed Major George S. Storrs as state

surveyor, and T. D. Hobart and E. A. Giraud represented the New York and Texas Land Company in establishing the correct boundary lines.³

When the new surveys were made it was found that J. O. B. Street, Silas Wilson, and Henry Fleming were located on lands which the Texas Land Company had leased to the United States Government. These surveys also revealed that the village of Mobeetie was located on section 45, Block A-5, which belonged to the New York and Texas Land Company, instead of being located on the adjoining section 44 which belonged to the state of Texas, and on which the original file had been made. This greatly complicated matters for Hobart and his Company, for the settlers and for the state. When Hobart was given instructions to settle these differences he informed Evans that he would put himself on the side of the settlers as far as possible and do justice to the Company. Despite this, Evans instructed him to proceed, and within a short time Hobart had settled all disputes with the settlers without resort to litigation. In the case of section 45 on which the town of Mobeetie was located, Hobart secured an exchange with the Government and got the lease on section 45 cancelled. This section was then sold to Wheeler County for \$10.00 per acre, and the county fixed legal title to all claims of settlers on this section.⁴

Fort Elliott was built in rectangular fashion with the officers' barracks on two sides and the soldiers' quarters on the two opposite sides. The flag pole was in the center. West of the barracks was the parade ground, and on the north of this plot was the hospital, "a large and commodious building." The quartermaster and commissary houses were on the east of the barracks,

³ W. S. Mabry, "The Location of Fort Elliott", *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume V, pp. 85-92; Gammel, *Laws of Texas*, Volume IX, p. 995.

⁴ W. S. Mabry, "The Location of Fort Elliott", *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume V, pp. 85-92; Hobart Letter Files; Evans to Hobart, February 7, 1889; March 13, 14, and 21, 1889; May 24, 1889; T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 6, 1934; T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to W. S. Mabry, Selma, Alabama, February 22, 1932. In the settlement of these disputes suit was brought against J. O. B. Street, who was district surveyor and not a settler.

while the guard house and the corrals were located on the south of the parade grounds. There was a well sixty feet deep on the parade ground and another at the hospital. Each company had a separate room, built in the shape of an L, for reading rooms and a mess hall. "In the library were Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Washington Irving's *Works*, and other standard authors of equal eminence. There were newspaper and pictorial journals, and a number of engravings were on the walls. A stove in the center heated the entire room".⁵

The first houses at Fort Elliott were built of pickets; cottonwood set in the ground three or four feet. Later lumber was hauled from Dodge City for building purposes. Colonel Hatch, the first commander at the fort, built a corral for the mule teams six hundred feet long by sixty feet wide, with walls four feet thick. The brick for the corral were made of adobe on Sweetwater Creek. As a result of this work Colonel Hatch won for himself the name of "Dobe" Hatch.⁶ The fort with its two or three hundred soldiers and officers was quite a sizeable establishment. When the buildings were sold at auction under the direction of the Custodian, George Dunn, they consisted of four barracks, six officers' quarters, a hospital, two commissaries, and a bakery.⁷

Lee and Reynolds, Post traders at Fort Elliott, furnished E munitions and supplies for the hundreds of buffalo hunters along the Canadian River and along the tributaries of the Red River in the Texas Panhandle. This made the fort a rendezvous for all the buffalo hunters of the northern Llano Estacado. Moreover since the fort was located at the southern extremity of the Dodge Freight Trail, it became a center for the collection of thousands of buffalo hides in this region. Consequently, the first settlements around the fort were given the name of Hometown. A few settlements were also made near the fort on the

⁵ *Fort Griffin Echo*, April 12, 1879. Texas Collection, University of Texas Library.

⁶ J. J. Long, Mobeetie, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, June 18, 1925.

⁷ Mark Huselby, Mobeetie, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, Canyon, June 18, 1925.

fertile lands of Sweetwater Creek. Here they had the protection of the fort and at the same time it furnished a ready market for their produce at attractive cash prices. Prairie hay was cut from the meadows of Sweetwater Valley to feed the teams at the fort, and wood was cut from its limited timber to supply fuel.⁸ Fort Elliott, therefore, not only furnished protection and employment for a considerable element of civilian population, but it also supplied sufficient ready cash for the needs of the community. The constant coming and going of the long freight trains with their accompanying bull whackers and mule skinners, and the frequent visits of the cowboys from off the Western Cattle Trail, made Fort Elliott a place of stirring activity during the first years of its existence.

As a result of this activity a thriving village grew up in the shadow of the fort one mile to the east. By 1879 a sufficient number of people had gathered around the fort for organization of Wheeler County. This was the first county to be organized in Northwest Texas, west of the 100th meridian. In selecting a name for the new town near the fort it was only natural that the name "Sweetwater" would be chosen. However, when application was made to Washington for a post office, the name Sweetwater had already been granted to the settlers of Nolan County. But these resourceful pioneers were not to be denied. Legend has it that an Indian chieftain was called in to give them the Indian name for Sweetwater, and *Mobeetie* became the first Anglo-American capitol of the Llano Estacado in 1878.⁹

Wheeler County, like most other West Texas counties, was organized with very few citizens, many of whom were not legal voters, but such procedure was justified on the ground that the

⁸ The cords of wood cut from Sweetwater Creek were sold at "exorbitant" prices. Temple Houston, commenting to Hobart on one occasion on the price of wood, remarked satirically that just as soon as his means would admit of it, he intended to have a pair of cuff buttons made out of cottonwood; that hackberry was beyond his means. T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, Canyon, Letter, April 1, 1930.

⁹ A. Finsterwald, Mobeetie, to Ruby Lee Williams, May 13, 1936. Finsterwald was a soldier at Fort Elliott for a number of years.

people "had to have some kind of laws." Clay County's attempts to administer justice two hundred and fifty miles away proved to be impractical. Thieves and gamblers still infested the country, and much trouble arose between them and the negro soldiers who were stationed at Fort Elliott at that time. The Ranger force, which was reorganized in 1874, was sent into West Texas,¹⁰ but it was impossible for the six hundred men provided for in the act of reorganization to police effectively such a vast territory. United States Marshalls often came into the Panhandle and made arrests, and took the victims two hundred and fifty miles to be tried for such violations as selling whiskey and tobacco without paying revenue.¹¹ Such conditions made the organization of civil government in the Texas Panhandle necessary.

With the establishment of Fort Elliott and the organization of Wheeler County, law and order were beginning to move into West Texas. The Dodge Trail formed an important connecting link between Dodge City and this new metropolis of the Southwest. The decade from 1879 to 1889 was to witness important and rapid changes in this unsettled region. By 1880 a stage line was running from Fort Elliott and Mobeetie to Harrold, then the terminus of the Fort Worth and Denver railroad, by way of Old Clarendon. A line was also extended to Springer and Las Vegas in New Mexico with Tascosa as an intermediate junction. During the decade scores of cattle ranches were established on the open, free ranges of West Texas. Wheeler County, with twenty-six counties attached for judicial purposes, made Mobeetie the judicial center of the Texas Panhandle. Being located near the Government Post, Mobeetie from its beginnings came to be looked upon as a center for law and order. Its legal connections with the older and

¹⁰ Walter Prescott Webb, *The Texas Rangers A Century of Defense*, Chapter 18.

¹¹ N. F. Locke, Miami, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, October 29, 1925. N. F. Locke served with the Texas Rangers from 1874 to 1876, and he was the first County Clerk of Wheeler County. He was a typical westerner and had had an exciting and colorful background as a frontiersman.

more settled portions of the state, and its close connections with Fort Elliott gave to the town a prestige that its sister towns might well have envied. These things helped to give to Mobeetie an element of permanence and stability which no other contemporary West Texas town had. For a decade, therefore, Mobeetie became an important pivotal center for the upper reaches of the Llano Estacado.

Mobeetie in its early days presented a picture which was in many ways similar to the towns of medieval Europe. Fort Elliott situated on a high elevation on the left bank of the Sweetwater Creek was visible for miles around. The fort overlooking the straggling village of Mobeetie rendered the town some of the same services as did the medieval castles of old. It was a place of refuge and protection in case of an Indian attack. It was a symbol of law and order. Mobeetie with its tents and dugouts, its adobes, and its small frame structures felt safe and secure under the protecting wing of the federal government. This dual combination of soldier and civilian was a novel sight on the West Texas plains. To the traveller who approached the town and the fort in the early morning hours, when they were often mirrored, and apparently elevated, by the mysterious pranks which only the mirages of the plains can play, the spectacle was even more unique and imposing. Likewise the traveller who made his first approach to the town by night was impressed by the strange and fanciful scene. A Fort Griffin editor who first saw this village at night gave the following description of the place: "We crossed Sweetwater Creek, on which the Post is situated, at dark and passing the government corral and Sutler's store we drove on to the town of Sweetwater about three quarters of a mile from the Post. It was dark when we reached the place and the town was lighted up like a city. Its small size and glaring lights gave it the appearance in a dark night like a first class steamer on the Mississippi River".¹²

¹² *Fort Griffin Echo*, April 12, 1879. Texas Collection, University of Texas Library.

Mobeetie was only one among several villages that grew up in the Llano Estacado during the decade from 1879 to 1889. Each of these frontier towns had its own peculiar characteristics which were determined by the conditions under which the town was established. In 1878 the Reverend L. H. Carhart, a pioneer Methodist minister, established a colony some fifty miles to the southwest of Mobeetie at the mouth of Carroll Creek in Donley County. Like all other frontier settlements during this period, Old Clarendon was made up of a motley group of citizens. This colony was a combination of a missionary, agricultural, and ranching enterprise. The undertaking was launched with the financial backing of Alfred Sully,¹³ an eastern capitalist, who was a brother-in-law of Carhart. Later the founder caught the spirit of high finance in the ranching enterprise of the region and finally succumbed under the weight of the unprofitable venture.

The settlers of Old Clarendon gathered from widely scattered sections of the nation, and their interests were almost as varied as the regions from which they came. Those who controlled and dominated the settlement, however, were from the North and East, many of them were highly educated and cultured. The founder of the colony set a high standard of morality for the inhabitants by refusing the sale of lots to anyone who proposed to sell liquor. By 1882 a sufficient number of people had settled at this sod town for county organization, and thereupon Donley County the third Panhandle county, was organized. Oldham county was the second county to be organized in 1880.

The settlement at Old Clarendon was primarily an agricultural and a missionary enterprise, but such attributes were ill suited to the hardships of a frontier stock country. They formed a striking contrast to the hard-working cowboys who were versed only in guns and cattle lore. The men of the range

¹³Willie Newbury Lewis, *Between Sun and Sod*, Chapter 5.

respected the habits and customs of this "Christian Colony", but they had little understanding of and sympathy with its ideals and culture. Therefore they dubbed the new settlement "Saints Roost".

The colony at Old Clarendon was one of the first agricultural experiments in West Texas, but it could not long survive the hard environment of the plains. When the Fort Worth and Denver railroad was built across the Panhandle in 1887-1888, it followed along the more level country to the south and missed the old town by a few miles. This spelled the final doom for the Methodist enterprise. The village was soon abandoned and the county's official records, and many of its citizens, moved over to the new town on the Fort Worth and Denver road. Despite its failure as an agricultural settlement, Old Clarendon left its imprint, and it has been a leavening factor in raising the cultural tone and standards in the Texas Panhandle.

A third unique effort at colonization and town building during this decade was the Quaker settlement made at Marietta, in Crosby County, in 1878. This settlement was made under the leadership of Paris Cox of Indiana. Cox, like Carhart, proposed to establish a colony of farmers on the West Texas plains. This settlement was different from other settlements in the Llano Estacado, not only because of its religious faith but also because of its purely agricultural nature and because it was located on the upland plains several miles away from any surface stream. The finding of water, therefore, was the first problem that demanded the attention of these new settlers. A well was dug, eighty-two feet deep, in the midst of the tents and dugouts, for the community water supply.¹⁴ No doubt here was the first water well that was sunk in the upland plains of the Llano Estacado. This was important and significant because it pointed the way for the solution of the water supply

¹⁴ J. W. Hunt, "A History of the Old Quaker Settlement: Estacado." MS. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon, Hunt's father was the physician at this settlement.

for the whole region in the years of colonization that were to follow.

In the dozen or more years of its existence the inexperienced plainsmen of this colony were confronted with obstacles on every hand. They fought against winds, drouth, pests, and even the cowboys and other settlers. The Quaker customs and language furnished much jest and merriment for the uncouth riders of the plains. Neither the social habits nor the economic order of the Quakers were adaptable to the cattle ranges of the plains. However, despite these difficulties, the Quakers held on tenaciously to the grass roots of the plains. They established the first college in the Llano Estacado—the Central Plains Academy. In 1886 the Quakers took the lead in organizing Crosby County, and Estacado became its first county seat.¹⁵ Eight counties—Dickens, Motley, Floyd, Hale, Lamb, Bailey, Cochran, Hockley, and Lubbock—were attached to Crosby County for judicial purposes.

As settlements increased rival villages grew up in the southern Llano Estacado, and this added another element of opposition to the Quaker settlement which proved fatal to its existence. In 1891 Emma, a few miles distant from Estacado, contested with the old town for the county seat. The contest developed into a Quaker and anti-Quaker fight and Estacado lost the election. Thus after fourteen years of hard experimentation, the Quaker settlement went the way of many other frontier villages in West Texas and passed into oblivion. Today it is almost a forgotten memory.

Mobeetie's most formidable rival was Old Tascosa. This village, which was named after the creek on which it was located, was on the north bank of the Canadian River at the mouth of Atascosa Creek in Oldham County. Since the name

¹⁵ The name of this settlement was changed from Marietta to Estacado when the county was organized because another post office bearing the name Marietta had already been established in Texas. See Roger A. Burgess, "A History of Crosby County", Master's thesis University of Texas, for an excellent discussion of this settlement.

Atascosa, meaning boggy, had already been designated as a post office in Texas, the founders of the new town had to drop the A in the spelling of its name. The site for Tascosa was selected by H. M. Kimball in 1874 because of its beautiful shady spot under a large clump of cottonwood trees. Kimball became the town's first blacksmith when the village was started in 1876. Tascosa was situated in the midst of several Mexican plazas along the banks of the Canadian, and Mexicans constituted from one-third to one-half its population as long as the old town was in existence.¹⁶

Tascosa was strictly a cow town. It was located at one of the best crossings for cattle herds on the Canadian River, and this caused many trail herds coming from the southern plains to converge at this point. Tascosa also served the cattle ranches in its environs for a distance of one hundred miles in every direction. Its bars and its game rooms furnished relaxation and entertainment for hundreds of trail outfits after they had crossed their herds over the treacherous sands of the Canadian. Tascosa was likewise a popular rendezvous for hundreds of cow hands who sought its saloon parlors and dance halls after weeks of hard riding over the sands and sage brush of the Canadian River Valley.

By 1880 enough voters had gathered in Tascosa and Oldham County for purposes of organization, and in that year Oldham became the second county to be organized in Northwest Texas. When the organization of the county was completed nine Panhandle counties—Hartley, Dallam, Sherman, Moore, Potter, Randall, Deaf Smith, Parmer, and Castro—were detached from Wheeler and attached to Oldham for judicial and land purposes.¹⁷ This gave to Tascosa a role in the judicial affairs of the Panhandle somewhat comparable to that of Mobeetie. Tascosa,

¹⁶ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, June 12, 1886. "The number of its (Tascosa) actual inhabitants is not above 250 or 300, a third or more Mexicans, and there are probably not much above three times as many in the county," said the editor of the *Pioneer*. The number of votes polled in 1886 was 168.

¹⁷ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, June 12, 1886.

also a town of tents and adobe, with an \$18,000.00 stone court house erected in 1884, reached the peak of its growth and expansion in 1888. At that time the town was doing two or three hundred thousand dollars worth of business annually¹⁸ with business concerns that included all of the ordinary forms from general merchandise to dairying.

Tascosa had a reputation for lawlessness that far outran the facts. Its Boothill cemetery, its Hogtown addition, its noted gunmen and bad whiskey, its gambling houses and notorious women have given to this old town a reputation that is almost nation wide. It is true that Tascosa was a typical cow town of the West with its shiftless and drifting elements of people, but it is also true that the town had its more substantial citizens, and these have been somewhat neglected in recording the town's history. Tascosa, like all other frontier towns, had its peaceful and law-abiding citizenry who came west to build homes in the new country. *The Tascosa Pioneer* declared that, "Society is not half so rough as many have been led to believe. It is true that there is perhaps more personal liberty to the square inch in the western Panhandle than in sections that boast of an older settlement, and it is true that our social regulations have been guiltless of church or Sunday school. But in general the people of Tascosa and Oldham are whole-hearted, sociable and exceptionally civil. Law-breaking is the exception and not the rule".¹⁹

Railroads proved to be the ruin of Old Tascosa. For a decade the people of the town had waited with high hopes and great expectancy the coming of the Fort Worth and Denver road. But when this road crossed the Canadian River it left two miles of deep sands between its track and the adobe village. The editor of the *Tascosa Pioneer* in commenting on this situation assured his readers that such "would long ago have done up any

¹⁸ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, January 21, 1888.

¹⁹ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, June 12, 1886.

other town than Tascosa, but she possesses the vitality which gives up to nothing. We're founded on the eternal rock and are not afraid".²⁰ But this handicap of Mother Nature Tascosa's citizens could never overcome, and the final arrival of the railroad was the beginning of the end of this, another frontier town. The editor of the *Pioneer* devoted column after column of his paper to a discussion of the advantages of the coming of the Rock Island railroad to Tascosa. But Nature had decreed otherwise, and the rugged breaks of the Canadian had sealed the future fate of Tascosa. When the Rock Island built across the Texas Panhandle from Liberal, Kansas, it headed straight toward the Southwest on the level prairies to the west without even making a bend for seventy-two miles. After this Tascosa's citizens began to abandon the old town; many of them went to the more promising new towns of Amarillo and Dalhart where the Southern Kansas and the Rock Island roads crossed the Fort Worth and Denver.

Tascosa lived in an age of rapid transition, and it could not cope with the new and fast-changing order. Although its span of life was brief, its history furnishes a splendid cross section of life on one of America's last frontiers. Time has already erased every vestige of the physical remains of the old sod town. The lonely Boothill cemetery, whose dead sleep silently above the turbid waters of the Canadian, and the more lonely hut of the wife of "Mickey" McCormick, together with the stone court house, are all that is left of what was once one of the most unique and stirring towns of the West. But with all of its enterprise and activity Tascosa always remained subordinate in importance to its sister city, the capitol of the Panhandle on the east.

Mobeetie was perhaps the most typical frontier town in the Southwest on account of its background and the cosmopolitan character of its people. It was never a large town as early plains

²⁰ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, March 15, 1889.



A Birdseye View of Mobetie, 1903

towns went, but it was a busy and a thriving center. When Hobart arrived at Mobeetie in 1886 the town was in the heyday of its existence. Its several merchandise stores and other business firms, its blacksmith shops and livery stables, its law offices and real estate agencies, its nine saloons and its fort, its substantial rock school building and its church organizations were a splendid index to the varied interests and character of its people. Mobeetie had all of the elements of people that it took to make a typical frontier village. It had its buffalo hunters and its bull whackers, its soldiers and its scouts, its cowboys and its gamblers, its indolents and its prostitutes, its substantial business men and its legal fraternity. Such a combination of people in a small but thriving village reflected clearly the rapidly changing order of things in the Southwest.

One of the most stabilizing influences among the citizenry at Mobeetie was its soldiers. While most of the soldiers themselves were transient and never became permanent citizens of the community, yet they exercised a restraining influence over the town and surrounding country because of the feeling of security which their presence gave to the region. Moreover, their business and official connections with the town, and the social prestige, which was given by the officers of the fort, gave an air of dignity to the town and community. At times there was dissension between the soldiers and civilians, but the most cordial relationships existed at all times between the officers at the fort and the more substantial business leaders of the town. The presence of several hundred soldiers at the fort increased the profits of the merchants, the saloon keepers, and the dance halls, and brought considerable ready cash into the community. The attitude of the citizens of the town toward the officers at the fort was well expressed in the following resolutions which were adopted by the Commissioners Court of Wheeler County on July 4th, 1881:

We the Commissioners Court of Wheeler County and the State of Texas representing the body politic of said county have heard with regret that the promotion of Lt. Col. John P. Hatch, 4th U. S. Cavalry, will remove him from the Post of Fort Elliott, Texas, to another military Department. That while we congratulate him upon the long deserved and long delayed honor hereby conferred, yet we cannot but know by hard experience that the removal from command of the only military post in the immediate frontier, of an officer whose course while in command has shown him to be thoroughly conversant with the wants of a frontier people and eminently qualified him to the command of a frontier post General Hatch has proven himself at all times agreeable to the citizens of this section and willing to aid them as a community or as individuals whenever such aid has been required, and to the fullest extent of his power, whether that aid has been needed in the way of defense against hostile Indians or encouragement to civil organizations, or charitable aid to individuals who could obtain it in no other manner in this isolated section of the country.

For his uniform course of kindness and good will extended toward the people of this newly settled country we think that it behooves this Court for ourselves and the community we represent to extend to him our sincere thanks.²¹

The most numerous and perhaps the most characteristic group of citizens of Old Mobeetie were her cowboys. From 1879 to 1889 this town was the metropolis of a ranching territory that extended more than a hundred miles in every direction. This made Mobeetie the emporium of the whole region. It was also a supply station for the trail outfits as they moved their herds up the trail to Dodge City, Kansas, and to the grazing lands of the Northwest. For miles around ranch outfits and cowhands came regularly to Mobeetie for their bacon, beans, flour, tobacco, whiskey, clothing, and equipment. There was scarcely a day during the working season that did not see a dozen or more cowboys coming off the range, after weeks of steady work, to slake their thirst at the town's bars, and to stake their summer's wages at an evening's poker game.²² "It

²¹ See Minutes Commissioners Court, July 4, 1881, at Wheeler, Texas.

²² "Mobeetie used to be the best town I ever knew as it represented the biggest territory. I have seen more money on the gambling tables in Mobeetie than I have seen at Pampa or any two towns twice its size. There were a good many professional gamblers. The ranch bosses, trail and range bosses, gambled quite a bit but the owners not so much. There were thirteen saloons at one time and I think I am safe in saying there was a gambling hall in every saloon. But there was very little disorder," declared Jesse Wynne who rode the range in this section for many years. Jesse Wynne, Pampa, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, January 1, 1928. Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

was no uncommon sight to see fifteen or twenty cowboys ride into town and ride right into the Exchange Saloon and order the drinks to be served to them on their horses, and then they would take in the town. I have seen both sides of the streets lined thick with saddle horses and extending from one end of the street to the other," said George Simpson.²³ This made the hitching racks of Old Mobeetie one of the town's most important institutions. Hundreds of cow pokes have found a welcomed rest around these hitching posts while their riders revelled in the pleasures which the town afforded until their heads were dizzy and their pocketbooks were empty.

These riders of the range usually notified the people of the town of their departure by shooting out a few lights, or by shooting up the town; but, as a rule, they were willing to pay for any damage that was done. To them this was their only means of entertainment and they meant no harm. "Many times I have seen a cowboy riding through the streets of Mobeetie shooting a pistol with one hand and taking a drink of whiskey from his bottle with the other. Sometimes they would ride in twos down the street shooting and yelling as loud as they could," said Mrs. Temple Houston,²⁴ but, added J. M. Shaw, "They helped to make Mobeetie a live burg in those days".²⁵ After a few more years had sobered and matured these rollicking cowboys, they became steady and substantial citizens of this western country.

No frontier town of these days could have been without its professional gamblers and its noted women. Mobeetie was no exception to the rule. The early history of this old town would not be complete if it left out of account such institutions as Feather Hill and other dance halls and saloons of its kind.

²³ George Simpson, Canadian, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, December 28, 1929. Simpson hunted buffalo all over the Llano Estacado from 1874 to 1876. He was the first man to secure a marriage license in this entire region. This legal document is on display at the Museum at Canyon. Simpson settled at Canadian where he lived until his death. He was one of the Panhandle's finest citizens.

²⁴ Mrs. Temple Houston, Woodward, Oklahoma, to L. F. Sheffy, December 30, 1929.

²⁵ J. M. Shaw, Canadian, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, December 30, 1929.

These places were made famous by many noted characters in the earliest days of the town's history. Hard earned money flowed freely in the gambling halls. Eight hundred head of cattle were staked and lost in one night's poker game. But too much emphasis should not be placed on this type of Mobeetie's citizenry, for gamblers, prostitutes, and outlaws formed only a small element of the town's population, and these characters were found in all frontier towns of the West.

Mobeetie, like other frontier towns, had its share of unique characters. Bill McKamey vied with all others for the honor of being the town's most distinguished person in that role. He ran a wagon yard, a feed stable, a restaurant, bar room, and family grocery store, and "as an outside trader made more horse swaps than all the rest of the country".²⁶ He was well known by all the buffalo hunters, and knew the country as well or better than any other person.

One of the most important groups connected with this Panhandle capitol were her legal lights. No town of the West ever produced more unique dispensers of the law than this frontier village. Judge Frank Willis, Judge Baker, Judge J. N. Browning, Temple Houston, W. H. Grigsby, W. H. Woodman, L. D. Miller, and Thomas F. Turner formed the nucleus of the legal fraternity, and they exerted a potent influence in bringing law and order to the Texas Panhandle. Mobeetie was not only the trade metropolis of the Panhandle, but it was also the principal seat of justice, and it became the judicial center for the interpretation and application of the laws for this part of the state. These men journeyed to Old Clarendon and Old Tascosa by stage coach, across unbridged streams and over unworked roads, to bring criminals to the bar of justice, and to interpret and apply the laws in their own peculiar way. In an open range country, where men were wont to exercise their unrestricted freedom, too strict an interpretation and too rigor-

²⁶ *Fort Griffin Echo*, April 12, 1879. Texas Collection, University of Texas.

ous an enforcement of the laws were likely to meet with open defiance; and both courts and juries had to use good judgment and common sense in the application and enforcement of the law. Judges and juries alike had to be democratic and sociable. It is said on good authority that on one occasion Judge Willis fined a citizen at Mobeetie for being late at court. Every kind of explanation was offered in order to get the fine remitted but to no avail. Finally, as a last resort, the Judge was invited into the saloon for a social drink and the fine was immediately forgotten.

Sessions of the court were not looked upon altogether as a means of meting out justice. They also furnished a splendid opportunity for social gatherings. Many people looked forward to court week with pleasant anticipations, and as occasions for celebrations. Those who attended sessions of the court came from widely scattered sections of the country and often brought their camp outfits and camped for several days at a time. Other events, therefore, such as horse racing, cock fighting, burro races, tournaments, and other sports were planned regularly during the court sessions. *The Tascosa Pioneer* for May 8, 1889, announced to its readers that, "District Court meets a week from Monday, and we look for music and fun then. Law breakers will need to look wary on that day, and so will the state because we look to see the bar represented by nearly all the illustrious lights of the Panhandle—her Wallaces and Matlocks, her Plemonses and her Turners, and her Hendersons and her Vivians and her Gowans and her Brownings and her Woodmans and her Houstons and her Grigsbys and Bakers." The following week's issue explained what disposition had been made of the court's civil and criminal docket in one column, and gave the results of the races in the next column.

By 1889 the Texas Panhandle had reached its first stage of maturity. The first period of settlement was well under way, and county organization was almost completed. The Fort

Worth and Denver and the Southern Kansas Railways had just been extended across the Panhandle and with this the new lines of settlement were marked out. The editor of the *Tascosa Pioneer* began to boast of the new towns along these railway lines without seeming to realize that they were harbingers of a new era. That he was conscious, however, of the Panhandle's growing pains was well evidenced by his discussion of "Panhandle Day" at the State Fair at Fort Worth in 1889. In discussing this question the *Pioneer* editor, under date of June 5, 1889, raised the question as to the territorial limits of the Texas Panhandle. "Does the Panhandle in this sense possess the wide significance given it of late by ignoramuses?," inquired the editor. "Does it cover an unlimited extent of territory, embracing everything northwest of Fort Worth? What we want to get at is, do we bona fide, genuine Panhandlians have to divide our honors of that day and mix and mingle with the Hardemanites, and the Wilbargerites, and the Baylorites, and the Wichitaites, and the way down residents of Clay and Montague and Wise? Because if we do our day's sport will be spoiled entirely. An answer to this question will greatly oblige us all. The *Pioneer* is of those who expect to go, and having all along fought their encroachments upon our hard earned 'rep' we still object to contaminating our skirts and compromising the superiority of this 'upper and better country'—the only real Panhandle. Condemn 'em, they can't clothe themselves in our name."

But Mobeetie had scarcely reached its maturity when its foundations began to shake and crumble. The approaching expiration of the government leases on the lands on which Fort Elliott was located created a feeling of fear and uncertainty among the citizens of the town as to the future of the fort. Rumors of its removal began to be spread abroad. Hobart wrote Major Evans January 2, 1888, that, "The people here are getting somewhat uneasy about the prospect that Fort Elliott will be abandoned sometime during the present year. . . . I

wish that we could bring some influence to bear upon the Govt. to induce the Govt. to purchase the reservation. I think it is decidedly to our interest to keep the Post here if it can be done. . . . What steps ought the citizens to take here in order to secure the permanency of the Post?"

Petitions were filed and letters were written by the citizens of Mobeetie to the representatives of both the state legislature and the national congress urging the continuance of the fort. These petitions were accompanied by a certificate from the Post Surgeon, "setting forth in strongest terms the excellent location of Fort Elliott from a sanitary point of view also an itemized statement of the value of improvements erected by the Government. . . . The people here will strain every nerve to continue the use of the Fort," wrote Hobart.

Despite all these efforts, however, the fort was abandoned in 1890 as no longer being necessary, and one of Mobeetie's strongest bulwarks was gone. The vanguard of the frontier had been pushed more than a hundred miles to the southwest and Amarillo, Lubbock, Sweetwater, Abilene, San Angelo, Big Spring, Roswell, and El Paso, now in their swaddling clothes, were destined to become the modern emporiums of the Southwest.

Mobeetie, like Tascosa, entered enthusiastically into the business of railroad building. The Santa Fe Railroad missed the Panhandle's capitol in 1887-1888 by several miles, but like its sister city on the west, the citizens of the old town looked forward hopefully to the time when Mobeetie would have a railroad. They even talked of building a branch line themselves from Miami to Mobeetie, but their pocketbooks could not match their enthusiasm. In 1887 the Frisco people ran a number of survey lines in the vicinity of Mobeetie, and in the summer of 1888 Hobart presided over a mass meeting which was held for the purpose of discussing the possibilities of securing this road. A substantial purse was raised to defray the expenses

of a committee to St. Louis to secure the Frisco road for Mobeetie. J. N. Browning, Frank Willis, Captain G. W. Arrington, and D. W. Van Horn made the trip to St. Louis but failed to bring the Frisco back with them.²⁷ The *Tascosa Pioneer* in the summer of 1888 announced that, "Mobeetie is rejoicing over the prospects of getting the Frisco road, prospects that seem growing brighter and more bright. When Gabe blows his trumpet in the far subsequently, Mobeetie and Tascosa will be there, and there are some of them that won't."

But the coming of the Rock Island to Tascosa, and the coming of the Frisco to Mobeetie, furnished the keynote of the swan song that was left ringing in the ears of the people of these frontier towns as they saw their hopes vanish and their prestige decline. It was finally left for the *Tascosa Pioneer* to face the stern realities and write the obituary of three of the earliest Anglo-American towns in the Texas Panhandle. The issue of October 11, 1890, carried the following tragic but significant remarks: "Time has dealt a little hardly with the three original Panhandle towns. Clarendon was knocked out by the Fort Worth and Denver and had to pick up and move bodily, Mobeetie was cut off by two railroads and the Fort Elliott post is being abandoned, and at Tascosa the Rock Island delays its coming. Truly this is a world which has no regard for the established order of things, but knocks them sky west and crooked, and lo, the upstart hath the land and its fatness."

Old Mobeetie is a symbol of the early towns of West Texas. The old town along with Old Clarendon, Old Tascosa, Estacado, Emma, Timms City in Lipscomb County, Reynor City in Stonewall County, Fort Griffin in Shackelford County, and Runnels City in Runnels County, are only a few of the half forgotten place names of what were once thriving West Texas villages.

²⁷ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, April 1, 1930.

The rapid changes of a frontier environment have erased much of the physical side of Old Mobeetie. Unfortunately no photographic print of the old town in its earliest days is available, if such exists, and the town as it was in its palmyest days has to be reproduced from the memories of men and women who saw it. If one should visit the site of Fort Elliott today it would be difficult to find even the foundation lines of the buildings where the fort once stood. Only a few scattered buildings remain as land marks of the Old Mobeetie that has passed into oblivion. The new Mobeetie stands almost within gun shot of the old town in the midst of a great agricultural and stock raising region. The worn and unkept buildings of the old town speak eloquently of its hard struggle to survive. They should be preserved as a lasting monument to the struggle and achievement of a people who wrought well in laying the foundations of anglo-American civilization in the Southwest.

THE PECOS COUNTRY AND THE SOUTHWEST

ONE OF THE FIRST and one of the last assignments of T. D. Hobart for the New York and Texas Land Company was in the Pecos country. Both the geography and the climate of the Pecos country make it a part of the Greater Southwest. Moreover, when the railroads penetrated this region their final objective was the Pacific Coast. This had been determined when gold was discovered in California in 1848. It was in the natural sequence of things, therefore, that the Pecos country would be the last part of Texas to be occupied by the Anglo-Americans. It was also in the natural order of events that this region would be colonized along with the remaining portion of the Southwest, since it was located on the extreme southwestern frontier.

Immigration into West Texas during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was only a part of a general migration of people into the Southwest. When railroads were extended into the Southwest and were connected with the Southern Pacific at El Paso, millions of acres of cheap lands were made available to the increasing surplus population in the North and East. Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City were the outlets for these land-hungry people, and West Texas was the corridor through which they passed on to the farther Southwest. The first waves of immigrants, therefore, settled on the Kansas frontiers, and it was not until the public domain of Northwest Texas was occupied that the homeseekers from the East pushed on farther toward the west.¹

The territory of the Southwest, which comprises mainly the present states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California,

¹ The increase in population in the 109 counties in West Texas from 1880 to 1910 was 582,547. The population in New Mexico during the same period increased only 7,736, while in Arizona the increase was 163,914. During the decades from 1910-1930 the population increases were as follows: West Texas, 646,653; New Mexico, 96,016; Arizona, 231,219. *United States Census Report*, 1940; *The Texas Almanac*, 1940.

was acquired by the United States in 1848 as a result of the war with Mexico. For centuries this land had been occupied by both the pueblo and the nomadic Indians. The sedentary Indians had lived in the region undisturbed for centuries and had reached a maturity that few races have attained.² Therefore, the culture and institutions of these prehistoric peoples had become deeply rooted and firmly fixed in the soil of this arid country: so much so that many of these ancient dwelling places are yet intact and are undisturbed by the agencies of modern civilization.

Yet for three hundred years the Spaniards made inroads into these outer fringes of the Spanish empire. It was through this region that Coronado and other Spanish explorers made the first trails of the white man into the territory which is now the United States. These explorations gave to Spain prior claims to the region as long as she retained her empire in the New World. Spain in her long efforts to occupy the Southwest left her permanent imprint on both the soil and the natives, and did much toward lifting the pueblo Indians through several stages of culture. Thus tempered by Spanish influence and Spanish culture, the aborigines of the Southwest have been able to survive through centuries of contact with the more modern and complex civilizations. At the same time Spain laid the institutional foundations which paved the way for the welding of the Latin-American and the Anglo-American cultures in the forge of the "Spanish borderlands" of the western hemisphere.

But destiny decreed that the welding process was not to begin until the nineteenth century. The Southwest not only formed a potential connecting link between the Latin-American and Anglo-American peoples, but it also established a barrier between them for centuries. Much of this land was the range of the Comanche and the Apache Indians who, after

² Dr. Edgar L. Hewett, *Ancient Life in the American Southwest*, p. 27.

they became mounted on their fleet Spanish ponies, proved to be invincible for Spain, and were the main factor in her undoing along the northern and eastern outposts of her empire in the New World. Spain finally abandoned this region "to nature and to the Indians", and it was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that the Anglo-Americans were able to subdue these wild tribes and force them onto the reservations.

Spain's attempts to occupy the northern borderlands of her empire paved the way for several permanent industries in the region more especially mining, irrigation, sheep and goat raising, and cattle production. In the early eighties of the nineteenth century cattlemen began to drift from West Texas into the Pecos country and beyond into New Mexico and Arizona. Several factors influenced this migration. The severe northern blizzards drifted thousands of Texas cattle from the open ranges into the Pecos country and this helped to demonstrate its value as a grazing region. Moreover, the overcrowded ranges in West Texas and the increased taxes which resulted from settlement, caused many cowmen to seek the less desirable but freer, wide open spaces farther to the west. Already the Goodnight-Loving trail was pointing the way to new markets for beef on the Indian reservations to the north and west.

Since the occupation of the Southwest by the Anglo-Americans resulted from an overflow of the cattle kingdom in West Texas, the methods and the technique used in the occupation in its earliest stages were much the same as they had been in West Texas: the small, independent cowmen came first and they were followed later by the large corporate concerns.³ The principal difference was that in the occupation of the lands in New Mexico and Arizona the federal homestead law of 1862 prevented the sale of lands in large tracts, and lands were leased

³ John Cowan, Pecos, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, January 8, 1927; O. B. Holt, Midland, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, January 3, 1927; Tom Owen, Van Horn, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, January 8, 1927; A. T. Windham, Pecos, Texas, to J. Evetts Haley, January 10, 1927.

rather than purchased for grazing purposes. This was significant in that it made these lands immediately available for homesteads as soon as the transition from ranching to settlement was begun.

However, the colonization and settlement of lands in the farther Southwest by Anglo-Americans did not get into full swing until the twentieth century for several reasons. In the first place larger land units and more desirable lands could be obtained in Texas as long as such lands were available for settlement. Moreover, since transcontinental railroads building into the Southwest focused in West Texas, these lands were more easily accessible to Anglo-Americans. In addition to these things, the vast distances, lack of communication, and slow means of transportation, plus the scanty rainfall, made the arid lands less desirable.⁴ But the settlement of lands along the nearer western frontiers accompanied by the extension of railroads into New Mexico and Arizona, and the increasing surplus of population east of the Mississippi River, with the consequent growing scarcity of cheap lands, all combined to turn the attention of additional thousands of home seekers to the Southwest at the opening of the century.

The *Topeka Capital* declared in 1905 that, "vacant Kansas land is rapidly being homesteaded. In the western counties of the state, where a few years ago fifty percent of the land had been allowed to go back to the Government, it is now next to impossible to find a quarter section of level land that can be homesteaded".⁵ In the same year *The Earth* chronicled the fact that as a result of the extension of the Gulf Coast and Santa Fe Railway, into Tom Green County, Texas, ranch lands were being sold at from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per acre and good farm lands from \$8.00 to \$12.00. "The country is developing rapidly, and settlers are moving in fast. Many large ranches have been

⁴ The statistics cited above show that the most rapid increase in population in New Mexico and Arizona took place during the period from 1910 to 1930.

⁵ Quoted in *The Earth*, Volume II, p. 15, January, 1905.

cut up into farms, and the country is fast passing from a stock country to a stock farming or farming country".⁶ W. L. Evans wrote Hobart in 1906 that the lands of the New York and Texas Land Company were selling rapidly in the Eagle Pass country; one commission man was paid over \$5,000.00 in commissions in four months. "Amarillo", said *The Earth*, "surprises the new comer in all ways. It is so new that every house in town looks as though it had been painted yesterday. Yet it has somewhere between 5,000 and 7,000 people with hotels, churches, banks, schools and everything that goes with an old country."

Farther west the country was newer and less developed. The editor of *The Earth*, in travelling through the Southwest, recorded the following observations:

As the train passes toward the Southwest all the superficial characteristics of the country remain the same, but there are other things that attract the eye. The settler has begun to come. His little unpainted houses dot the landscape. His plowed fields show the rows where grew the last summer's Kaffir corn. There are piles of straw where he threshed his first experimental wheat crop. There are long lines of little trees. There are rude open sheds for his cows and horses, and there is always and everlastingly a windmill. It is a feature of the landscape. It is all so new that one wonders if it will last. It is so crude that one is reminded of the early days in Central Kansas, and of the still later times around Newton and Wichita. The same scenes will be enacted over and over so long as there is a new prairie country to make homes in. This is one of the last that are left. . . . You may add to the picture the little new towns, with the new stores and the new signs on them, and the new plank sidewalks, and over all must be imagined the cloudless blue dome and the sunshine that never fails.

The editor declared further that the old means of pioneering by means of the covered wagon, when there were no roads, no bridges, no building materials, and no stores for supplies, had passed away, and now homeseekers could "get on the train with comfortable sleeping quarters" and, after two or three days travel, arrive at their destination. "The railroads of the Southwest," he said, "are the busiest railroads in America, and their profits accounts are in striking contrast to the other sec-

⁶ *The Earth*, Volume II, pp. 5-6, February, 1905.

tions. . . . The Southwest is the Mecca for the homeseekers of this decade just as the Middle States of now was the objective section to which the homeseeker of fifty years ago directed his ox team. And the Southwest has an advantage over the new country of twenty-five years ago in that it is the last".⁷

During the opening years of the twentieth century immigration agents, railroads, newspapers, and land agents advertised these cheap lands extensively in the Middle Western states and sent thousands of farmer colonists to the Southwest in search of homes. The editor of *The Earth* observed that as a result of these advertising agencies,

Towns are springing up where were only sidetracks a few weeks ago. Freight trains are taking load after load of farm implements, lumber is going in train load quantities. . . . It is simply a march across the country of a great army crowded out of its old camping place and seeking new grounds. It is the mighty march of men who win with the plow and the threshing machine. It is a great awakening, such as the boom days never knew, and awakening that has attracted the attention of money and men all over the republic.⁸

In addition to cheap lands, many other inducements were offered to the new immigrants to the Southwest. The fertile soil which the accumulation of the centuries had produced, together with the smooth, level surface, the mild climate, the clear sunshine and the dry atmosphere with its health-giving qualities were only a few of the attractions held out to the new comers. In fact there was only one of nature's elements that was lacking—water.

But man in his irresistible search for the hidden resources of nature had greatly increased the water supply in the Southwest. Vast water sheets far under the surface were being discovered. *The Earth* in the issue of April, 1904, declared that the Panhandle of Texas "has an underground water sheet that

⁷ *The Earth*, Volume I, p. 2, April, 1904. In two days the Santa Fe handled eight train loads—2,000 people—through Kansas City. This road sold as high as 15,000 tickets in a single day to the Southwest. In January and February, 1904, western lines received in the immigration bureau \$77,740.45 as against \$65,901.53 during the corresponding months of the previous year, and \$36,409.00 in the months of 1900. *The Earth*, Volume I, pp. 5-8, March, 1904; Volume II, p. 7, February, 1905.

⁸ *The Earth*, Volume I, p. 5, March, 1904.

is inexhaustible." A special correspondent of the *New York Evening Post* observed in 1906 that, "Probably nowhere in the United States is so marked and so singular a transformation going on as in the Panhandle region of Texas." This rapid transformation the writer attributed to the discovery of water, "found nearly everywhere that a tapping is made. In a section that I passed through five years ago there was not at that time a single windmill. At that identical place, in the heart of the Staked Plains, there are eighty-seven windmills".⁹

Water has been a serious handicap for plains people ever since prehistoric man made his first appearance in the region. For centuries the sedentary Indians, and later the Spanish, had successfully engaged in agriculture to a limited extent by means of irrigation. When the Anglo-American colonists reached the Pecos and the Rio Grande valleys they found irrigation ditches centuries old cut through the rich, arid lands adjacent to the flowing streams. Wherever water penetrated the alluvial soils of the valley lands of the Southwest they produced in great variety and abundance. These valleys had long been occupied by a happy and contented people and nature had amply rewarded their ingenuity and industry in the cultivation of the soil. Nature's challenge to the new comers, therefore, was to read the object lesson recorded in the soil by preceding generations and, with the aid of modern science, improve the technique of the ancient peoples in the old agricultural experiment. Irrigation was to be the final solution to the settlement of the cheap lands in the Southwest.

William E. Smythe initiated the irrigation movement in the West by contributing articles to the *Omaha Bee*. He later moved to Denver, Colorado, where he established the *Irrigation Age*. As a result of drouth which extended over wide areas in the West in 1890 the question of irrigation became a national

⁹ Quoted in *The Earth*, Volume III, p. 12, April, 1906.

problem and the first national irrigation congress was held at Salt Lake City in 1891. From this time on irrigation congresses were held periodically and the people of the Southwest took a leading part in these meetings.¹⁰

As a result of these meetings the irrigation movement spread rapidly over the entire Southwest. New Mexico boasted in 1908 that it had 400,000 acres of land under irrigation and had water for 2,000,000 additional acres. *The Earth* announced through its columns that science was,

Transforming the reputed desert into prosperous farm lands. Winds, not 'hot air', and the gasoline engine will yet redeem millions of acres where a few years ago even the cattlemen, wanting nothing but grass, declined to go because of the want of natural unfailing running streams. . . . It is in the farther West that the experiments seem to be tried and the knowledge attained. In some of the localities there we are merely learning to do again what the men of an unknown civilization did centuries ago, ere they passed away and were forgotten. In others we are imitating these forgotten tribes in regions where they never were. In still others we are delving for the resources of nature and finding them in vast water sheets far under the surface, in the sources of mountain springs, in the snow beds that glitter a hundred miles away, in the storing of the flood waters of a single week to make them last a summer through, in the adoption of plants for which the world has been searched to make them grow for us as the products of daily life.

It was estimated that there was an area one thousand miles square lying between the 102nd and the 125th degrees west longitude and extending from Canada to the Rio Grande Valley, one-third of the national territory, that was subject to irrigation.¹¹

By 1905-1906 the irrigation of lands was well under way. James J. Hagerman of Roswell was one of the first to open up new irrigated lands in Eddy, Chaves, and Roosevelt counties in New Mexico. In advertising these lands Hagerman stressed their health-giving values, the ideal climatic conditions, beautiful landscapes, and the revolution that was being wrought in

¹⁰ Ralph E. Twitchell, *The Earth*, Volume V, pp. 13-14; Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains*, chapter VIII.

¹¹ *The Earth*, February, 1904.

lands by means of water. *The Earth* chimed in with the remark that,

Times have changed with a rapidity that makes ten years ago seem ancient. It is not what men did thirty years ago in Iowa and Illinois, but what man can do *now* in Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle, and in the irrigated valleys of the Southwest. . . . The opinion of what a country is good for may change in a single season. A ditch with water in it will change it. A well whose waters pour out upon the withered sod will make it over. A few acres experimentally planted to sugar beets will give it a new character and a new value. Kaffir corn and milo maize and two or three other sorghums. . . . changed the value of millions of acres of land in half of one decade.¹²

These advertising agencies gave much stimulus to immigration into the Southwest. In 1906 the Santa Fe Railway shipped 1246 car loads of immigrants into West Texas and Eastern New Mexico; in 1907, 2334 car loads, and in 1908, 1648 car loads. W. R. Draper estimated that from 1903 to 1908 four and one-half billion dollars were invested in western lands; that one million people purchased lands in the Southwest, and that ten million people visited the region. Irrigation and successful scientific experiments in soil culture by dry farming methods added millions of acres of cheap farm lands to the Southwest and in 1908 colonization agents were offering 200,000,000 acres of such lands for sale.¹³

However, the development of irrigation in Southwest Texas had not been without its difficulties. During the early experimental years irrigation worked its way back eastward out of the older and more settled regions of the Southwest. These were critical years in the transitional development that took place in the arid region of Southwest Texas. The years 1902 and 1903 were hard, dry years, and many cattlemen closed out because of the scarcity of grass and water.

In 1902 Hobart was sent to the Pecos country by Major Evans to make a first hand study of conditions there and to make recommendations to Evans as to what policy should be

¹² *The Earth*, Volume II, February, 1905, p. 8.

¹³ *The Earth*, June, 1908, pp. 10-11.

pursued with reference to leasing, fencing, taxes, sale of lands etc. Hobart made an extended report to Evans on conditions in the Pecos country. He wrote Evans in part as follows:

I note that it was your desire to raise the rentals in that country to 4 cents per acre per annum, wherever we were justified in doing so, but that rather than have any hitch in the proceedings, you would prefer to renew it at the old rate of 3 cents per acre per annum. . . . The country just at present, so far as the stock raising interest is concerned, is in a rather critical condition, as it has been dry for months, and up to the time I left, there had not been any rain.

On a number of the large leases it does not seem to me that it would be wise, under present conditions to raise the rentals. . . .

In connection with the lands embraced in these leases, and along the lower part of Toyah Creek. . . . will say that quite an area is covered with salt grass. I remember the time when stock-men did not appreciate the full worth of that character of country, but it turns out now that it is the best and safest that there is in the whole region, being sub-irrigated, and will sustain cattle during long drouths, while they would perish in other localities; and I think considerable care will need to be exercised in disposing of single sections. . . . Mr. Thorp insisted that he wished to hold his rights in regard to the canal. . . . I noticed that he had a small force at work along the canal, making slight repairs, but as he explained, doing nothing more than make a show, for the purpose, I suppose, of holding rights.

He informed me that he had, or was about to acquire the Williams Ditch on the West side of the Pecos River, below Pecos City; that there would be considerable development in that locality the coming season. I understand from inquiry that considerable success has been had in farming by irrigation in Grand Falls; also that several thousand acres are in successful cultivation in Ward Co., near Barstow.

On January 28, 1903, Hobart also made a report to Mr. Don A. Sweet, Traffic Manager of the Santa Fe Railway Company, on the work of the Dixie Irrigation Company in Southwest Texas. He reported that Mr. C. Q. Sharp, one of the promoters of that corporation, was "a shrewd energetic man and claims he has plans perfected for carrying out a large irrigation scheme." This scheme involved the issuance of \$2,500,000 worth of bonds. The corporation proposed to build storage reservoirs to save and utilize waste water from the Pecos River and surrounding country. They proposed to avail themselves of the work already done on the old Highland Canal and extend the

work four or five miles past Pecos, on through and past Toyah Lake, and connect with the old Williams Canal down the river. Sharp claimed that he had the assurance of insurance companies that his bonds could be readily placed. Hobart thought the lands under consideration were suitable for irrigation, provided a sufficient water supply could be obtained, and that if the lands could be utilized for farming, they would become valuable. He added that "The writer is very familiar with the Pecos Valley in Texas, throughout the greater portion of the distance that it traverses the state, having been employed as a surveyor in that locality in the years 1883 and 1884. . . . and I am confident that there are no better lands to be found anywhere on the Pecos in Texas than in the locality we have now under consideration."

In reply to Hobart's report, Major Evans wrote on July 12, 1902:

I duly received your personal favor of the 9th inst. from Pecos and note carefully what you say about conditions in that country. I think you are quite right in your idea that it is our policy to help the abolition of absolute leases in Reeves County to the end that settlers may get into that country and break up the large pastures and so help us to sell our lands and create a class of taxpayers who will not allow the county to be controlled by the big stockmen and the T & P R R Co. . . . However it will be necessary for us to be careful in this matter so as not to antagonize these parties unnecessarily. The course pursued by the cattle men of returning their cattle at a low valuation and ordinarily not putting in more than half of their cattle is calculated to throw the burden of taxation on the land owners.

During the first decade of the twentieth century ideas of irrigation and new methods in soil culture spread over the entire Southwest from the Pecos Valley in Texas to the San Joaquin Valley in California. The rapid increase in immigration into the region helped to popularize these new ideas. Irrigation by working its way back from the Pecos country into the Texas Panhandle, gave a new impetus to immigration into Northwest Texas. By 1911-1912 immigration and land sales reached al-

most boom proportions as a result of the extension of railway lines and irrigation in the western part of the state.¹⁴

The search for water was stepped up at a rapid pace in West Texas during these years. J. C. Crowell, a well driller in the Texas Panhandle, testified in 1909 that he had drilled about 150 wells in the Panhandle and that he had "never sunk a well where I did not obtain water of the finest freestone quality, and unlimited quantity. I regard this as the best watered country I ever saw for underground water, both in quality and quantity".¹⁵ In 1911-1912 E. H. Perry, J. H. Slaton, and the Santa Fe Railway Company drilled three shallow water wells in Hale County. The flow of water from these wells at the rate of 2,000 gallons per minute created much interest and excitement. Crops grown by irrigation from these wells showed surprising gains in production. J. E. Lancaster of the First National Bank of Plainview declared that,

The time has come for the united effort of the farmers, merchants, bankers, and all other business men, to develop this country into one of the finest districts in the world. This statement is not an iridescent dream nor an idle fancy, but it is a statement of a truth susceptible to practical demonstration.

There are two fundamental facts to be considered—land and water. That we have the greatest quantity of land no one will deny, and that it is of the best quality must be admitted by everyone who has investigated. Recent developments have proved, beyond all doubt, that we have an abundance of water of the best quality to irrigate every foot of land in Hale County, if properly applied.¹⁶

Development in irrigation in Southwest Texas was keeping pace with that in the northern portion of the state. H. Y. Evans wrote Hobart on April 19, 1912, that the country around San Antonio was being developed rapidly. "Irrigation," he said, "is the thing for this part of the state. An Eng. Co. is putting in an expensive dam on the Medina River 27 miles

¹⁴ 5700 miles of railroad were built in Texas from 1900 to 1914. *Texas Almanac*, 1925, p. 172 and following. Most of this increase in railway mileage resulted from the building of branch lines in West Texas by the four main trunk lines extending toward the Southwest.

¹⁵ *The Earth*, Volume VI, p. 2, September, 1909.

¹⁶ *The Earth*, Volume VIII, pp. 10-11, March, 1911.

from here to irrigate large areas below. The project will cost \$6,000,000.00. Railroads are being built to the coast and Rio Grande Valley."

Thus, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the water problem of the Southwest had apparently been solved. Improvements in agricultural machinery and in the technique of soil culture had added millions of acres of agricultural lands in the Southwest to the nation's granary, both in the rich valley and the fertile uplands of the more arid region.¹⁷

Hobart kept in close touch with these new developments. He attended the meetings of the national irrigation congresses regularly. Governor O. B. Colquitt appointed him as a delegate from Texas to the National Irrigation Congress at Chicago in 1911. He held membership in the National Irrigation Association and followed its proceedings closely. He was even more interested in water improvements in West Texas. It was during these years that he spent much time in providing more water for the colonists of the White Deer lands.

Irrigation, dry farming, railroad building, and immigration into the Southwest made it possible for the New York and Texas Land Company to dispose of all of its lands in the Pecos Valley and the Lower Rio Grande. By 1918 the Company's lands had been sold and the New York and Texas Land Corporation passed out of existence. At Austin, Texas, in 1918 the final exit of the company was made with a bonfire of thousands of letters, ledgers, and other documents, and with this another of the many similar literary tragedies in Texas was enacted.¹⁸

¹⁷ Irrigation in Northwest Texas was developed gradually from 1911 to 1936. After 1936 irrigated lands increased rapidly in the region. There were 600 wells in operation in this area in 1936 which irrigated 80,000 acres. In 1944 there were 3500 wells in operation irrigating 450,000 acres, and the total area within the exterior boundaries of the principal irrigated districts was approximately 3,000,000 acres. Fifteen percent of this area was irrigated. The principal distribution of wells in the area in 1944 was as follows: Hale County, 760 wells; Lubbock, 535; Floyd, 390; Swisher, 385; Deaf Smith, 350; Lamb, 310; Castro, 265; Bailey, 165; Hockley, 100; Randall, 60; Crosby, 55; Briscoe, 25; Parmer, 20; Dallam, 25. The remainder of the wells were in Armstrong, Lynn, Martin, and Terry counties. The depth of these wells ranged from 60 to 80 feet. Report, *Texas Board of Water Engineers*, Austin, Texas, 1945.

¹⁸ W. G. Franklin, Austin, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 5, 1942.

Nevertheless, the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited, one of the oldest land corporations in West Texas, had played an important role in the colonization of the region. This corporation was both important and significant because it symbolized in a splendid way the checkered history of large land corporations in Texas' public domain. When the liabilities and assets of these corporations are finally recorded, on the asset side of the ledger, there will be thousands of colonists and settlers who have produced, and are yet producing, untold wealth for the state, to set over against the graft, greed, and speculations of many West Texas corporations.

However, it was largely by means of the corporation that the spearhead of settlement of Texas lands was thrust far toward the west to make El Paso del Norte the pivotal point of the meeting place of three races of people—the Indian, the Latin-American, and the Anglo-American. El Paso, Laredo, Corpus Christi, and San Antonio are only a few of the Spanish place names that mark the farthest northern and eastern fringes of Spain's empire in the New World, and also the final outposts of Anglo-American expansion toward the Southwest. It was the Spanish "borderland", therefore, that was finally to link the two races together.

The Pecos Valley because of its geographical location, its topography, and its people, has played an important role in the long and difficult process of uniting the Latin and Anglo-Saxon races on the outer fringes of the Southwest. In ages past the Pecos Valley was the home of the prehistoric cliff dweller. It later became the range and hunting ground of the Apache and Comanche Indians, and in the latter part of the nineteenth century it was incorporated into the great cattle ranges of the Southwest. In the more recent years the Anglo-American colonists threaded their way along the winding course of the Pecos, and on into the Lower Rio Grande. They lifted the rich silt-laden waters onto the alluvial lands which skirt the banks and

valleys of these rivers to make Southwest Texas one of the finest citrus fruit growing regions and one of the most fertile garden spots in America.

Legend has it that, "When God was creating the universe, He had a great deal of surplus material left on His hands, and in His haste and in a moment of regret and repentance, He dumped the residue into one rugged and fantastic heap and thus created the Southwest".¹⁹

Today this region with its vast stretches of territory, its dry prairies and alkali dust, its forbidding mesas and mountains, its fertile valleys, and its majestic scenery forms one of the most important and one of the most unique areas in Texas and the Southwest. It is the home of newly-made farmers and truck growers, of cattle and sheep ranches, and of much wild life. The "brush country" of the Southwest produced the famous Texas longhorns and some of the finest cow horses that any region has ever known. It has nurtured and preserved one of Spain's oldest industries in the New World which, with the aid of more modern scientific methods, has become the center of the nation's wool and mohair production. Out of Southwest Texas has been carved one of the nation's parks. The Big Bend National Park is not only destined to become one of America's great recreational play grounds, but with Mexico's proposal to set aside lands for a national park across the Rio Grande it would be an important step in linking the Latin-American and Anglo-American peoples closer together. Beneath the arid lands of the Southwest has been found one of the state's greatest oil and gas fields which have added millions to the wealth of the state and, by chance, have made the University of Texas and the A & M College two of the wealthiest and, potentially, two of the greatest universities in the land.

The Pecos country and the Southwest have always been out on the rim of international life. The people of the region,

¹⁹ *The Earth*, Volume VIII, p. 2, December, 1911.

though few in number, have been both cosmopolitan and isolationist. Nature has dealt somewhat harshly with the people and they in turn have dealt rather harshly with each other and with the people of the outside world. The life and interests of the people have been as varied as the nature of the country itself, but nature has made them a thrifty and industrious, if at times a lawless people. Nevertheless, Southwest Texas has perhaps made more far reaching changes and more rapid progress, since Hobart and his surveying crew ran their first survey lines along the Pecos in 1883, than any other region in the entire Southwest, because the people had further to go than those of any other region.

COLONIZATION OF THE WHITE DEER LANDS

WHEN T. D. HOBART severed his connections with the New York and Texas Land Company in 1903 he entered into a new phase of work in West Texas in the colonization of the White Deer Lands. As stated in a previous chapter, in 1883 The New York and Texas Land Company, Limited, conveyed to the Francklyn Land and Cattle Company of St. Louis 631,000 acres of land located in Gray, Carson, Hutchinson, and Roberts counties. The New York and Texas Company retained a first lien on the entire property to secure the payment of a large sum of money represented by several notes given by the Francklyn Company as part payment on the land. The New York and Texas Company later sold these notes to Edgar J. Elgood and William Godden of London, England.¹

In the purchase of these lands the Francklyn Land and Cattle Company issued bonds or debentures, most of which were sold in England, and which constituted a second lien or mortgage on the lands purchased. The Francklyn Company was backed by E. F. Cunard of the Cunard Steamship Lines, who was Francklyn's father-in-law. Colonel B. B. Groom, a promoter from Kentucky, was made Manager of the Francklyn Company, and his son, Harry Groom, became Assistant Manager. Groom came to be noted for his extravagant and reckless purchases of cattle, and for his utter lack of familiarity with land and ranching conditions in West Texas. He bought cattle, book count,² at a time when cattle prices were high, and in one of the greatest boom periods in the history of the cattle industry. There seemed to be no limit to his cattle purchases. He bought 40,000 head of cattle from the Harrold Brothers and 20,000 head from Captain E. F. Ikard, both in the Wichita River

¹ White Deer Letter Files, Volume III, p 274.

² In 1883 big companies began to come in and buy out the small cattlemen. They organized cattle companies all over the western part of the state.

country in Texas, at \$22.50 per head, and also made purchases all along the Red River up to Doan's Store. "Anybody who had cattle for sale could sell to them," said J. M. Ikard.³ Such extravagant purchases prompted the Company headquarters at St. Louis to send Groom the laconic telegraphic advice to, "Buy only necessities; for God's sake don't buy everything you see."⁴

As a result of these liberal purchases, and the big die-up after the hard winter of 1885-1886, the Francklyn Company was forced to the wall and went broke. In 1886 the bondholders of the company brought suit in the Federal Court at Dallas, Texas, asking that the second lien be foreclosed and that the land be sold. Judgment was obtained and the lands finally came into possession of Frederick de P. Foster and Cornelius C. Cuyler, New York capitalists, subject to the first lien.⁵ Elgood and Godden of London who now held the first lien notes on the White Deer Lands, entered into an agreement with Foster and Cuyler, holders of the second lien, whereby the former agreed to release title to the lands as fast as they could be sold. Russell Benedict, 18 Wall Street, New York, a law partner of Foster, was made Trustee of the White Deer Lands with full power to release the lien upon any part of the property upon payment to Benedict by Foster and Cuyler the sum of \$2.50 per acre.⁶

³ J. M. Ikard, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 23, 1944.

⁴ This telegram is on file in the White Deer Files at Pampa, Texas. T. D. Hobart, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, June 6, 1934.

⁵ The sale of these bonds was made to Ferdinand Van Zandt and Henry Kingsmill, both of London, England. Van Zandt and Kingsmill conveyed the land to Frederick de P. Foster and Charles Fry of New York. Fry re-conveyed his interest in the land to Foster, who in turn re-conveyed an undivided interest in the land to Cuyler. T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Lawton T. Hermans, Mason, Michigan, December 31, 1904. White Deer Letter Files, Pampa, Volume II, p. 75. After the transfer of these lands to Foster and Cuyler they came to be known as the White Deer Lands taking the name of the creek which drains the lands on the North. Kingsmill, a banker in London, was representing the bondholders in England in the sale and transfer of these bonds. M. K. Brown, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, August 23, 1944. Brown, a nephew of Kingsmill, came from England to Texas in 1903 and entered the employ of the White Deer Lands and has been closely identified with them since that time.

⁶ T. D. Hobart, White Deer Letter Files, Volume III, pp. 75 and 274. M. K. Brown and A. H. Doucette, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, August 23, 1944. Mr. Doucette began his employment with the White Deer Lands in 1906 as a surveyor. He has been with the Company ever since that time. He has a thorough and detailed knowledge of these lands.

When Foster and Cuyler became the owners of the White Deer Lands Mr. George Tyng was made manager for the Company. When Tyng assumed the management of the properties in 1886 he found only 4500 head of cattle on the ranges of the Company's lands out of 56,000 which the book count showed.⁷

Since the lands were of little value, Tyng divided them into eighteen large pastures,⁸ fenced them, drilled all necessary water wells, and leased these pastures to cattlemen for grazing purposes at from 2 1/2 to 10 cents per acre per annum. Only slight improvements were put on the lands during Tyng's administration, and little effort was made to dispose of the property until the opening of the century. Tyng was a civil engineer. He had mining interests in Utah and was not interested, therefore, in the further development of the White Deer Lands. He resigned his position in 1903 and recommended Hobart as his successor.⁹

Tyng believed that Hobart's years of experience in handling Panhandle lands and in dealing with Panhandle people eminently qualified him to take charge of the White Deer Lands. Under date of March 12, 1902, Tyng wrote Frederick de P. Foster of New York the following letter of recommendation:

Five years ago T. D. Hobart, of Canadian, Texas, presented to you an introduction from me. You may remember him. Men are not made more trustworthy and conscientious than Hobart. Everyone who knows him, friend or enemy, would tell you the same. He has been selling land all over the Panhandle for sixteen years or longer and knows land and land buyers. The lands

⁷ *The Tascosa Pioneer*, September 1, 1886.

⁸ Some of the largest of these pastures were: Spring Creek Pasture, with 61,850 acres; White Deer Pasture, 70,080 acres; Jeffries Pasture, 43,520 acres; Red Deer Pasture, 108,000 acres; Dixon Creek Pasture, 107,520 acres. Other large pastures were: North Fork Pasture, Buffalo Pasture, Groom Pasture, Combination Pasture, Spring Creek Pasture, McClellan Creek Pasture, Gillespie Pasture, and Jeffries Pasture. Much of the White Deer Lands had been acquired in solid blocks without the alternate school sections. A. H. Doucette and C. P. Buckler, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, June 21, 1938. Mr. Buckler came from England in 1905 and began his employment with the White Deer Lands. He has been with the Company continuously since that time.

⁹ Tyng went to American Forks, Utah, where he engaged in the mining business. He was killed instantly in his office at American Forks by a snow slide in January, 1906, and was buried there in accordance with his request. T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Frank Elston, Panhandle, Texas, January 31, 1906. Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

so long in his charge are nearly sold out. He has a young family, a small ranch and bunch of cattle in Hemphill County (next to Roberts) and would like to stay in the vicinity. . . . There is your man.

After Hobart was employed by the White Deer Lands Tyng wrote Andrew Kingsmill: "You are fortunate in securing his services. His connection with it (The White Deer Lands) alone, will go far toward curing the black eye this outfit has been getting during 1902,—under my charge." In February, 1903, after Hobart had been employed, Tyng gave him the following introduction through the columns of the local newspapers:

Most of you know that I have for a long time been trying to have my employers get Mr. T. D. Hobart to sell out this land for them. . . . When you see his advertisement just steer homeseekers toward him, if you want to see this country settled up with good neighbors whose presence here will add value to your own property and business.

Mr. Hobart believes that it is better for the owners and better for the country to sell this land to farmers rather than in large tracts.¹⁰

The White Deer Lands presented a challenge to Hobart. He believed that these lands would furnish him an excellent field in which to experiment with colonization schemes that he had cherished for years. These undeveloped lands were ideal for colonization from its initial stages. Titles to land had to be cleared up, hundreds of miles of fence had to be built, section lines and section corners had to be established, large pastures had to be divided, wells had to be drilled, windmills had to be erected, roads had to be marked out, farms had to be established, and homes had to be built. The White Deer Lands, equal in area to the state of Rhode Island, contained lands ranging from slopes and rough lands, which were admirably adapted to stock raising, to the level prairie lands of the plains, which were ideal for farming. The rich, fertile soil ranged in texture from a dark chocolate loam on the uplands to a sandy soil in the Canadian River Valley. These lands were drained on the north by the tributaries of the Canadian, and on the south and east by the Red River and its tributaries. The climate was well suited for both farming and stock raising. Hobart saw an

¹⁰ Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas.

excellent opportunity for merging the two industries on the White Deer Lands. Therefore, on December 26, 1902, he wrote Major Evans and tendered his resignation as Panhandle agent of the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited. He requested that his resignation become effective February 1, 1903. "It is not without a feeling of sadness," he said, "that I contemplate severing my long and pleasant business relations. Allow me to express my appreciation of the great kindness and consideration that you have extended to me in the past and wishing you and your interests the largest measure of success in the future."

When Hobart took over the management of the White Deer Lands things were more or less at a standstill. The panic of 1903 was clearly reflected by conditions in the Southwest. Cattle prices were low, few land sales were being made, and immigration was at a low ebb. Hobart wrote E. B. Purcell of Manhattan, Kansas, that the winter of 1903-1904 was one of the dryest he had experienced in this country, but with the coming of the spring rains prospects looked better.¹¹ Such conditions, however, did not disturb Hobart for he knew they were temporary and were only a prelude to better days. He had a large clientele in the Middle Western and Eastern states who kept him busy with their inquiries about the purchase and sale of both land and cattle. To all such inquirers he gave the same advice: it was not a good time to sell, but it was the best time to buy. "The time has come again when there is more grass than cattle in this country," he wrote, "cattle have gone to pieces so in price and so many cattlemen are in debt, that they will be obliged to sell cheap."

In the meantime Hobart was busy formulating his program for the administration of the White Deer Lands. He collected scores of written testimonials from early settlers and ranchmen

¹¹ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to E. B. Purcell, Manhattan, Kansas, May 6, 1904. Hobart Letter Files, Pampa.

who had been experimenting with Panhandle soils as farming lands. The whole history of the experiment was well summed up by the recital of the observations and experience of Colonel T. S. Bugbee from the time of his arrival in the Panhandle in 1876. Colonel Bugbee reviewed briefly the changes that had taken place since the buffalo and free grass era which, he said, "lasted for about eight years, when ranchmen began to buy and lease lands they grazed on; then fencing began and in a few years the entire country was under wire fence, the pastures were soon overstocked, windmills soon came into use so that all the land under fence could be used, but we were soon overstocked and began to have heavy losses." This was followed by the coming of the nesters¹² and the beginning of farming on a small scale. Colonel Bugbee concluded his testimonial with the following remarks:

I started to farm six years ago with one hundred acres of feed crop. Last year I planted twelve hundred acres of Kaffir corn, sorghum and milo maize, which made over two tons to the acre, worth double what the land was worth that it was raised on. One can plow here all winter and can plant from March till July. I made a new departure last season; in August I planted seventeen acres of alfalfa for a hog pasture, and in spite of the dry fall and winter it has come through and will make a crop of hay by May 1st.

My farming has been confined almost wholly to forage crops as I wished to increase my carrying capacity as the lands got more valuable; one acre of the forage crops I have named is worth forty acres of grass to winter on. I have seen my farming neighbors grow from 50 to 60 bushels of oats on the plains, and corn that would be a credit to Missouri. We raise all kinds of fruit that are grown in the state; on the whole I think it is the best poor man's country on earth.¹³

Hobart wrote Godden Son and Holme in London on June 7, 1903, and recommended the sale of \$35,000.00 worth of White Deer Lands. He added, "I have formed a plan of advertising outside of the local newspapers, as soon as conditions

¹² Term nester is frequently used in referring to the earliest plains settlers. The designation is often confused with those who "jumped" or "squatted" on school lands which belonged to absentee owners. These squatters either secured title to such lands or they were paid a small fee by the person who made the original file for abandoning their claims to the land in question.

¹³ Thos. S. Bugbee, Clarendon, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, April 4, 1904. Published in pamphlet by the *White Deer Lands* in 1905.

warrant advertising at all, and a little later will submit same to you." He realized that the British creditors understood nothing about conditions in Texas, and that they were interested only in transferring the White Deer Lands into cash in order to satisfy the first lien on the property. He was also convinced that his task would require interminable delays at best, and that the holders of the lien would have to understand and approve of his program if he were to succeed. He determined therefore to sail for London where he could explain his plans in detail to the English lien holders.

Hobart never did things on the spur of the moment. He always looked ahead and planned every undertaking in detail. Before sailing for England he secured letters of introduction from United States Congressmen and influential American leaders, to the American Ambassador and other high officials in London. He also wrote his kinsman and former employer, Major Ira H. Evans, for advice. The Major was pleased that Hobart was going to make the trip, for he believed that it would clear up all possible misunderstandings between Hobart and his new employers. He advised Hobart that, "Dress is very important with Englishmen and in London. You will need a Prince Albert suit and silk hat over there. Foster is strong socially and you will have to be ready to hold your own with him. You should take along full data as to deeds etc to support your statements, copies of Tyng's letters etc." Hobart, dignified and versatile man that he was, could mix and mingle with the utmost ease and composure as a peer among the most elect of the socially elite. He made all due preparations for his journey and on June 8, 1904, accompanied by his young son Warren, he sailed on the Teutonic of the White Star Line for England. He was well received in London and his employers, lien holders, and bondholders, gave their hearty approval of his program for the disposition of the White Deer Lands.

By 1905 the nation's panic, with all of its accompanying

maladjustments, was over and a wave of prosperity was in the offing. During the spring and summer of 1905 Hobart was kept busy leasing the White Deer lands, answering inquiries from homeseekers, building and repairing fences, building reservoirs for water, putting down wells, and improving the White Deer properties generally. Leases were in demand and ran as high as fourteen cents per acre. Land prices rose rapidly accompanied by an increasing volume of land sales. Hobart wrote Russell Benedict on August 23, 1905, that he had planned a short vacation trip with his family to Portland, Oregon, "but it does not look very favorable for it now, as there are so many prospectors coming into the country. . . . It looks now as though a change has really taken place in this country and while we may expect temporary setbacks, as they are liable to occur in any locality, still the outlook at present is very favorable for the location of some substantial farmers on the White Deer lands and a material advance in prices".¹⁴ In August, 1905, Hobart wrote H. E. Richardson of Collinsville, Indian Territory, that, "Crops are fine. Lots of prospectors, sixteen here one day this week." In October of the same year Hobart wrote Godden Son and Holme of London that the Houston and Texas Central Railway was placing a large amount of its lands in the Northern Panhandle on the market for the first time at \$5.00 per acre. He also informed the British firm that the State of Texas had placed several million acres of its lands in Southwest Texas on the market. "Apparently the tide of immigration has set in this way, but of course something may occur to check it at any time. Close observers, who have been watching the movement, claim that in reality it has just begun. . . . By another year it may be best for us to build an additional fence in some cases so as to eliminate settlers from the land we lease to cattlemen, or, in other words, gradually retire the cattle interests from the settlements".¹⁵ "Taking

¹⁴ White Deer Letter Files, Volume III, p. 700.

¹⁵ White Deer Letter Files, Pampa, Texas, Volume III, pp. 982-983.

everything into consideration," Hobart pronounced the Spring of 1905 the best since 1885, and he expected to see land values rise and land sales increase as a result.

The Texas Panhandle was now attracting nation-wide attention. The *Earth* in one of its issues in August, 1905, declared that, "The Pan-Handle of Texas. . . is the only large body of Virgin Agricultural Land left on the map. The region comprising 25,000 square miles is in the very heart of the Great Southwest. . . a part of the short grass country. . . and was until 1905 mainly a cattle country." The correspondent of this publication was greatly impressed with the large number of windmills in the Southwest at the beginning of the twentieth century.

"Nowhere," he wrote, "are so many mills to be seen, and nowhere are they seen used to advantage in so many ways. In Western Texas is one ranch which has 500 windmills at intervals over its range. The pump of each mill is connected by pipes to water troughs set around it. The mill is going constantly, day after day, the year round. The troughs are thus kept full of water and the cattle are never forced to go long distances to drink. . . Thousands of cattle have grown fat and been sent to market without ever having seen a creek or drunk from a roadside puddle. Besides this, the windmill drives farm machinery, irrigates fields, cuts corn and fodder, churns butter, runs dynamos in small towns, and often forms the 'water works' of a country village."¹⁶ The *Chicago Tribune* also observed that, "the short grass country has found that it can prosper whether there is rain or not. They can sink wells at a distance of from thirty to one hundred and fifty feet; wells which never go dry no matter how long and how protracted the drouth. . . This with the new Campbell system of soil culture assures the farmer plenty of moisture and makes farming in the short grass country a success."¹⁷

It was in this decisive year of 1905 that Hardy W. Campbell, famous advocate of dry farming in Nebraska, was brought to Bovina, Texas, to conduct an experiment in dry farming in the Texas Panhandle. After one year's experimenting Campbell declared that, "It is impossible for anyone to comprehend even to a small degree the yielding powers of these plains country soils when put into proper physical condition. Of all the different sections of unoccupied prairie country none seems to

¹⁶ *The Earth*, Volume II, p. 8, January, 1905.

¹⁷ As quoted in *The Earth*, Volume II, August, 1905.

offer such marked opportunities for the homeseeker as the Pan-Handle of Texas, and none are so grossly misunderstood from the fact that it has always been known as a grazing country only".¹⁸

The time was now ripe for Hobart's plan of colonization and he was well prepared for his new task. He inaugurated a plan of selling the White Deer lands in small tracts, ranging in size from 160 to 640 acres, to settlers only. The terms of the sale were usually one-fifth cash and the balance in 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 years respectively from date of purchase with interest at the rate of six percent per annum. No payment was required for the first year after sales were made so that purchasers could make certain required improvements on the land; such as building a substantial three-room residence, fencing, providing water, and other necessary improvements. Settlers were required to set aside thirty feet along the borders of the land for roads, and no stock were to be turned loose until the land was fenced with three strands of wire. Every possible inducement was given to the purchaser to improve the property and to build permanent homes.

It was on the rolling prairies of the White Deer lands that hundreds of stock farmers, with little or no money, began to task of building a civilization. These early plainsmen had to find sufficient water, learn how to cultivate the soil, build homes, churches, and schools, and rear their families in a new land. Their tools and equipment were meager and the development was slow; but the soil was virgin, the lands were cheap, and the terms of payment were easy. Without the credit features in the sale of the White Deer lands instituted by Hobart many of these early Panhandle stock farmers could not have remained. Suits were never brought against purchasers for failure to make their annual payments, and when lands were relinquished by the purchasers every effort was made to

¹⁸ *The Earth*, Volume II, p. 7, October, 1905.

find a new purchaser to reimburse the original settler for whatever investments he had made. Hobart's plan in the disposition of these lands was unique in that he sold lands directly to settlers only and without the aid of any outside agencies.

In his attempts to sell the White Deer lands direct to settlers Hobart soon found himself in competition with large immigration companies, land corporations, and land agents of every sort and description. With the placing of millions of acres of land on the market in Texas and the Southwest at the opening of the century many immigration companies were formed in the North for the purpose of advertising and selling these cheap lands. These organizations often enlisted the aid of numerous land agencies in the Southwest in their efforts to exploit and profit from land sales.¹⁹ These agencies, both local and national, operated by securing exclusive options on land sales from individuals and from absentee landowners, and frequently from land corporations themselves. Such options usually ran from sixty to ninety days, and required the lands to be sold at a fixed price agreed upon with no cash forfeit being attached to either party to the agreement. The agents would then take advantage of the unfamiliar and unsuspecting homeseekers from the North, who were accustomed to high-priced lands, and sell West Texas lands for a much higher price than was agreed upon with the original owner, but would not put the actual sale price of the land in the deed of conveyance. In this manner land agents and immigration societies put the difference between the actual sale price of the land and the price for which the land was listed for sale by the original

¹⁹ Some examples of these organizations are: The Western Land and Emigration Company and the International Land and Emigration Company, both of St. Joseph, Missouri; and The Oklahoma and Texas Land Company with headquarters at Oklahoma City, and with branch offices at Omaha, Nebraska; Maquoketa, Iowa; Chicago, Illinois; St. Joseph, Missouri; Danville, Illinois; Cincinnati, Ohio; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In reply to an inquiry about real estate firms, Hobart wrote T. Sugg of McLean, Texas, that, "It is hard to keep up with them nowadays. In one town in the Panhandle is reported that the bootblacks have quit their former occupation and gone into the real estate business." White Deer Files, Pampa, November 20, 1905; *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume III, p. 92.

owners in their own pockets. Thus these grafters collected hundreds of thousands of dollars and in doing so exploited on a large scale both the owner of the cheap lands in the Southwest and the immigrants to these lands.

Hobart refused to be connected with such irregular practices. He wrote Godden Son and Holme on December 31, 1904: "I am making no effort at present to sell the smooth farming lands to mere investors or speculators." Rather he ran the following advertisement in a number of Iowa and Missouri newspapers: "500,000 acres of rich farming land in the famous Panhandle of Texas. Homeseekers should apply to T. D. Hobart, Agent".²⁰ Hobart wrote A. L. Conrad, Traffic Manager of the Santa Fe Railway at Amarillo, on October 4, 1905, with reference to options on White Deer lands as follows:

I am in receipt of your favor of the 3d inst. . . . relative to Messers Brown and Nash of the South and West Land Company of Chicago. We are not prepared to give options on our lands so that I do not see how we can transact business with these people. In selling our smooth farming lands we try to sell exclusively to people who will occupy and improve them, feeling that this plan is the best for the country in general as well as for ourselves. We have many applications from parties who want to sell our lands, giving us the price we ask for them, and we allow them to put a different consideration in the deed, keeping the difference as their own pay for selling. This we positively refuse to do in every case as the consideration named in our deeds will show just what the purchasers pay us.²¹

Such a policy brought down upon Hobart the wrath and indignation of both the local land agents and the large immigration companies in the North. This resulted in a heated rivalry between Hobart and the land speculators. He was continually nagged by these agents on every hand. They interfered with his land deals whenever they could and did everything possible to turn prospectors to other Panhandle lands. Hobart was continually advising his prospective land purchasers that, "There will doubtless be a number of land agents on the train you come down by, who will inform you that this

²⁰ White Deer Files, Volume III, p. 285.

²¹ White Deer Files, Volume III, p. 892.

land is not for sale or not on the market; please don't take any notice of these remarks but come and find out for yourself."

In 1905 and 1906 these large immigration companies ran regular homeseekers' excursion trains from Chicago, St. Louis, and other points in the North into the Texas Panhandle. Transportation was free to all those who purchased lands. When these trains reached the point of their destination they were parked along the railroad sidings for several days at a time, and scores of land agents took the homeseekers in their automobiles and showed them over various Panhandle lands which were listed with them. These trains were closely guarded so that individuals or corporations who did not have their lands listed with the immigration companies would not have an opportunity to contact the prospective buyers. Since these excursion trains ran through the center of the White Deer lands, Hobart built an attractive display booth for the agricultural products of Gray County near the Santa Fe tracks as an advertising medium for the lands now under his control.

In 1905 Hobart had several thousand pamphlets printed with maps showing the location of the White Deer lands; photographs of schools, churches, homes, harvesting of crops, cattle herds and other scenes. These bulletins contained descriptions of the climatic and soil conditions, water supply, topography, rainfall, railroad facilities, crops, county organization, financial and tax conditions, etc. In these pamphlets were to be found many testimonials of farmers and stockmen who had gone through the period of experimental farming. The brochure even suggested plans for the building of homes, tree planting and landscaping, care of trees and many other things. These pamphlets contained much valuable information which prospective land buyers were seeking and they were for free distribution.

Distribution of these brochures was strictly forbidden by the immigration authorities, but many of them found their way

into the hands of prospectors nevertheless. These pamphlets proved to be a matter of much annoyance to the immigration companies, and a keen rivalry developed between them and Hobart which lasted for several months. As a result of this feud in early September, 1906, Hobart received the following letter from one of the Chicago agents:

I confess that I was getting ready to slug one of your agents who persisted in handing booklets into my car last week, when we got him side tracked by a little diplomacy. He seemed to be a little light in the upper story and a few questions asked him, caused him to so tangle himself that he did us no harm whatsoever, but nevertheless it might pay him to be a little more discreet in the future. I assume that his methods were without your knowledge or sanction.

My real reason for writing you is to enquire just what you have to offer. We can bring down one or two carloads of people each excursion. Anything that we sell must offer better than one dollar per acre, while my General Agents must have another fifty cents and then we must have something to pay cost of free sleeping cars, livery rigs, etc. Kindly write me fully what you can offer and if it is satisfactory I may stop off to see you on the return from next weeks excursion. I am going down with a carload on the Wright Special next week, am going to stop off at Amarillo, Sunday, the 9th, at the Elmhurst. If you can write me so that it will reach Chicago before leaving here next Tuesday evening do so, or if pressed for time write me and address it to Room 7, Union Depot, Kansas City, where I will be Wednesday forenoon, Sept. 5th. We can sell from 10 to 25 sections per trip if the proposition and terms are right.

Hobart was a law-abiding and peace-loving citizen, but he would fight at the drop of the hat when principles were involved. His righteous indignation often reached the boiling point when he meditated upon the unscrupulous methods which the foreign agents were using in selling lands to ill-informed purchasers. The above letter, therefore, was not calculated to cool his ardor or to soften his words. In reply to the above letter he responded in the following terse but plain spoken words:

I am receipt of your favour of 31st. ult. and note contents.

I do not employ any outside agents, and consequently am not in a position to accept your proposition; otherwise might be pleased to take the matter up with you.

I also note your statement that you were 'getting ready' to slug one of my men the other day. The fact that you occupied all your time in getting ready, and did not carry it any further, is an indication to me that you are a man of

rare good judgement. I have no control whatever over the personal actions of the man you refer to, but I feel very sure that he will not trouble you if you do not trouble him; but if you or any other of your 'sluggers' entertain the idea of slugging him or anyone else in this section of the country, allow me to suggest to you that it would be a very good idea to follow your former plan and continue 'getting ready', in fact, knowing the man as well as I do, if I entertained the idea of slugging him, I would postpone it, and let it be the last thing I did before 'crossing the divide'. I have been in Texas some 24 years, and my knowledge of Texas people convinces me that they do not take kindly to slugging, and I have known the results to have been very unpleasant.

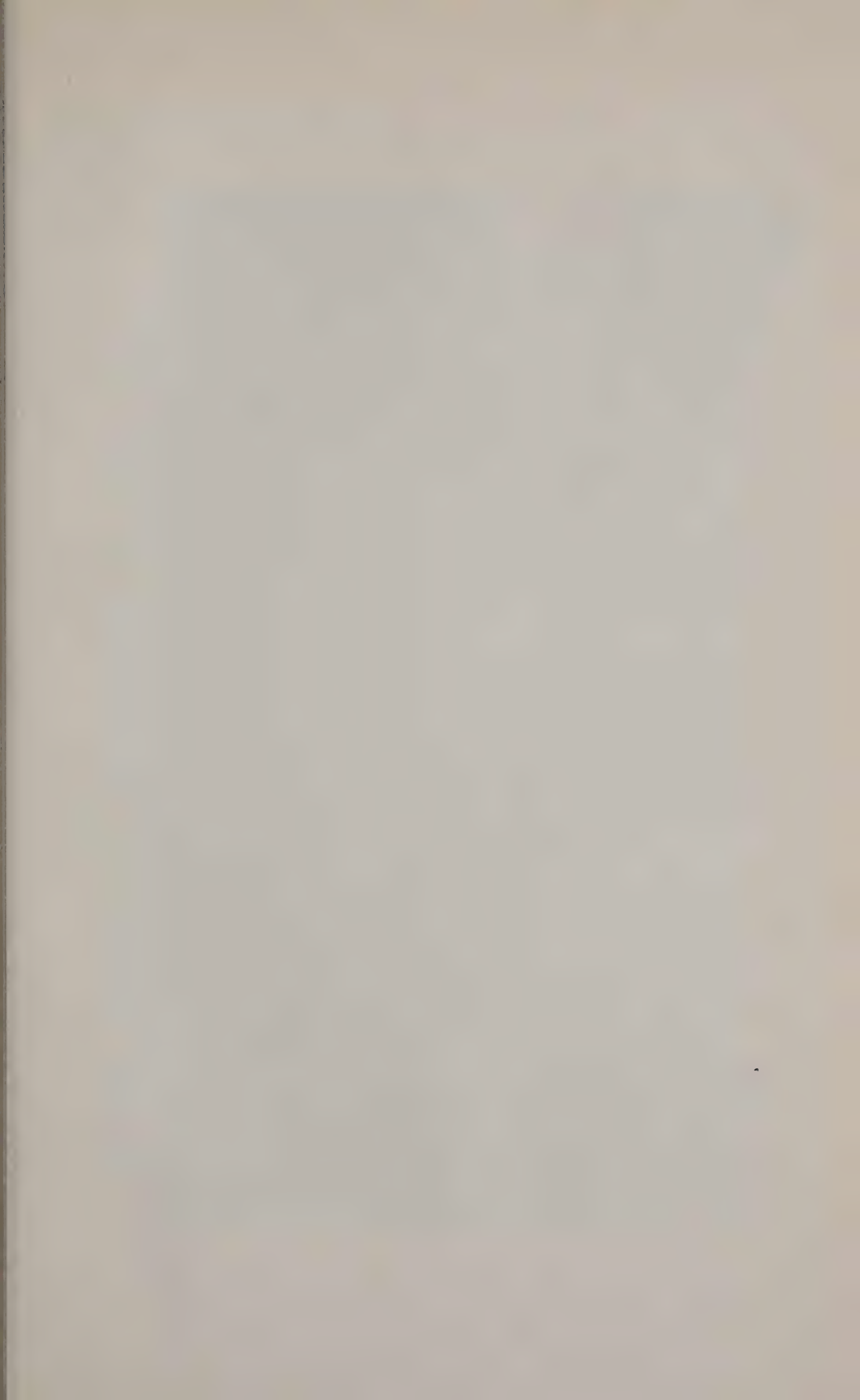
Just keep your sluggers in Chicago, and I feel very sure that they will enjoy much better health than if they attempt to apply their vocation here.²²

As the weeks passed the feud waxed warm between Hobart and the immigration agents. These agents resorted to every kind of strategy to prevent buyers from getting information about the White Deer lands, but their secretive methods aroused the suspicion of the homeseekers and Hobart's booklets were in great demand. This stirred the anger of the foreign agents to its highest pitch. In retaliation two nightly raids were made on the White Deer exhibit room on the Santa Fe tracks. Windows were smashed and other damage was done. This fight involved the officials of the Santa Fe Railway who furnished the excursion trains to the Southwest, and who were greatly interested in seeing the lands along their lines settled and developed. Hobart, therefore, in order to relieve these officials of any embarrassment, wrote Avery Turner, the Passenger Agent at Amarillo, the following letter in which he gave a detailed account of the differences between him and the immigration officials, and offered to remove the exhibit room if the Santa Fe officials so desired:

I called at your office yesterday and was sorry to learn that you were ill. I had a little conversation with your chief Clerk and in a measure stated to him my side of the case in the recent controversy with land agents at Pampa.

To go back a little, I will say that I have been besieged by land agents from all over the country with applications to handle the White Deer Lands. It was of course perfectly natural that they should want to handle these lands, but as we are not placing our lands in the hands of agents, I was obliged to politely decline their offers of assistance. Since then it has been persistently advertised

²² For copies of these letters see White Deer Files, Pampa, Texas.





Immigrant Train from Nebraska to Canyon City, Texas

by some of these people throughout the North, as well as in the Panhandle, that the title to the White Deer lands was worthless. There is no mistake about these misrepresentations, as I have been advised of it from several different sources. . . .

I have been very slow to interfere with the operations of any of these land men, and I do not feel that I owe them any apology for the work that I have done recently in advertising these lands.

Three weeks ago last Wednesday and Thursday we had our first exhibit of Gray County products in the little building which you allowed me to construct on the right of way near the depot at Pampa. I had instructed my men not to attempt to go on any of the regular excursion trains and not to pass booklets into these cars unless the passengers asked for them; but in the event they did ask for them, to comply with their request. On the Thursday above mentioned, I was standing near the little exhibit building (I had no booklets in my hands nor about me, but did have some in a little receptacle on the side of the building) when one of the passengers called to me from the car window and asked me to hand him some booklets: I did so, and one of the land men came up and insulted me. We had a few words and the matter ended in that way. The same day another of the land men insulted one of my men, and received rather harsh treatment so far as talking was concerned in return. The man referred to might have passed in booklets that day without their being called for, but if he did so, it was without my instructions.

Last week, Wednesday and Thursday, we had our second exhibit. . . . The first regular excursion train cut off the engine and made a run for water, leaving the train about half a mile from the station, which of course was their privilege to do. Some of the men went down the track to meet the train with booklets. One of my men had some booklets in his hand on our land outside the right of way fence, when one of the men from the train approached him, and without any provocation other than his presence there with booklets in his hand, called him a vile name, which it is not necessary for me to repeat here. My man threw his booklets on the ground and told the people to help themselves, and then paid his respects to the man who had insulted him, and but for the presence of the Deputy Sheriff would probably made that party wish he was somewhere else instead of Texas. Right here I will say that both the Sheriff and one of his deputies were present—the Sheriff at the station and the Deputy at the place stated. They were there at my request, and were not there to intimidate or bulldoze anyone, but simply to preserve order; they would have arrested either myself or any of my men as quickly as they would have arrested any of the land men referred to had they been justified in doing so. I understand it is charged that I went through the train distributing literature under the protection of the Deputy Sheriff. I did not leave the station ground, nor did I enter or attempt to enter any of the trains; neither did any of my men make any such attempt. One of the citizens of Pampa, who was not in my employ at all, was standing near one of the trains at the Depot, when he was insulted by one of the land men: the party giving the insult was

promptly invited to step off the train, but very discreetly decided to remain where he was. Several of the trains stopped opposite our little exhibit, and the men in charge acted the part of gentlemen, and everything passed off smoothly.

I will add that while the Deputy Sheriff was near the train that stopped about half a mile from the station a week ago today, the same party who insulted him two weeks previous told the Deputy to be careful, as he had a man on the train with a gun. He was promptly advised that that was the man he was looking for, whereupon the land men retired to the train. . . .

I do not wish to do anything that will in any way embarrass you, and if you think best for me to remove the little building, I will cheerfully do so. I feel, however, that I can assure you that there will be no trouble here on excursion days unless some of those land men start it.²³

With this letter Hobart dropped the matter. The tide of immigration had definitely set in toward the Southwest, and the White Deer lands had received much favorable publicity at the expense of the immigration companies. "At last we have apparently succeeded in getting people started this way in their search for homes, and I have recently quite materially advanced the price of land, without seriously checking sales. Some of the best advertising we have secured is from people who have been here and have examined what we have to offer and told others in regard to it," wrote Hobart.²⁴

There were several factors which contributed to more hopeful prospects for the Texas Panhandle after 1905. In 1903 the first wheat crops were planted and by 1905 wheat was averaging from twenty-five to twenty-seven bushels per acre.²⁵ In 1912 more than 500,000 bushels of wheat were shipped from Pampa alone, and two years later the wheat acreage in the vicinity of Pampa was from 60,000 to 80,000 acres with an estimated yield of twenty bushels per acre.²⁶ The introduction and development of cotton farming in the counties along the eastern border of the Texas Panhandle occurred simultaneously

²³ White Deer Files, Volume V, pp. 278-282.

²⁴ White Deer Files, Volume III, pp. 700 and 817.

²⁵ T. D. Hobart, White Deer Files, Volume III, p. 516.

²⁶ T. D. Hobart in White Deer Letter Files, Volume II, p. 736.

with the development of wheat farming and with like results.²⁷

Moreover, cheap lands which had been plentiful during the nineteenth century were dwindling rapidly in the early twentieth century. In November, 1906, Hobart called attention to the fact that all the homestead lands in Texas had long since been turned over to the school fund, and that while there was a considerable amount of less desirable state school land on the market in Southwest Texas, there was none in the Panhandle.²⁸ In 1908 nearly two million acres of Oklahoma lands were placed on the market; more than half of this land lay in the Oklahoma Panhandle.²⁹ Hobart believed that the constant flow of immigration into the Oklahoma Panhandle would undoubtedly overflow into Texas. *The Earth* reminded its readers that the Texas Panhandle joined Northwestern Oklahoma and "with no difference in the character of the country" a quarter section was made to maintain a family in Oklahoma because of the Federal Homestead Law, whereas the unit of available land per family in Texas was much larger.³⁰ "You will note that we do not care to sell more than one section of our best farming land to one person. . . . Our object is to settle up the country, as each good substantial settler that comes into the country benefits my Employers as well as other people in the country," wrote Hobart.³¹ Thus where Oklahoma lands drew settlers away from the Texas Panhandle in the latter nineteenth century, the settlement of the Oklahoma lands gave impetus to immigration into the Texas Panhandle in the early twentieth century.

In addition to these things the advent of the steam driven

²⁷ See J. D. Tinsley, "Agricultural Development of the Texas Panhandle", *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume VIII, pp. 54-65. Tinsley shows that 80 percent of the 20,398,080 acres in the thirty-three counties of the Texas Panhandle is good tillable land, and that in 1929, 32.8 percent of the total area and 42.1 percent of the total estimated tillable area was under cultivation.

²⁸ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Nichols Bros., Gatoosa, I. T., November 26, 1906. Hobart Letter Files.

²⁹ *The Earth*, Volume VI, p. 24, July, 1909.

³⁰ N. P. Willis in *The Earth*, Volume I, p. 6.

³¹ T. D. Hobart in White Deer Letter Files, Volume VII, p. 380.

tractor into West Texas in 1905 presaged a new era for this grassland region. It was estimated in 1911 that only about one percent of the 1,250,000 acres of land north of the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle was under cultivation, and there were immense tracts of land between the Canadian River and the Texas and Pacific Railroad in West Texas whose grass roots had never been broken. As a result of the introduction of the steam plow, Don. H. Biggers predicted that in 1911 the amount of land under cultivation in the Texas Panhandle would be doubled.³²

The introduction of the steam tractor into West Texas was accompanied by the automobile, the telephone, and other modern conveniences. More than three thousand miles of railroad were built in Texas during the decade from 1900 to 1910—most of it in West Texas. The greatest annual increase in railway mileage in Texas since 1882 was made in 1910 with the construction of 710 miles.³³ Railroads were bringing immigrants to West Texas in great numbers. In January, 1909, the Santa Fe Railway shipped 218 carload shipments of immigrants into the Panhandle alone.³⁴ The Panhandle country was attracting wide attention not only because of its cheap lands, but also because of its climate, its soil, its water, its agricultural products, its improved transportation system, its public schools, its churches, and its academies.³⁵

Hobart's years of experience in dealing in Panhandle lands had taught him that changes came slowly. He was confronted, therefore, with the age-old problem of dealing with both the settlers and the cattle men. It required patience, effort, and forethought to transform one thousand square miles of territory

³² *The Earth*, Volume VII, p. 12.

³³ See Texas Almanac for 1925, p. 173.

³⁴ Robert Hallenberg in *The Earth*, Volume VI, p. 2, September, 1909.

³⁵ Several academies had been established in West Texas by 1910 by various denominations. In 1910 the West Texas State Normal College (now The West Texas State College) was established at Canyon. This was the first state college to be established west of the 100th meridian.

from cattle ranches into stock farms. Moreover, much of the White Deer land was better adapted to ranching on a small scale than to farming. Leases from these lands brought a considerable income, and since all large pastures were leased to substantial graziers, Hobart was anxious to retain them. It required a vast amount of capital to develop these thousands of acres of raw land into agricultural lands, and Hobart's only sources of income were from leases and from annual payments on land sold to settlers. His problem, therefore, was to divide properly pasture lands from farm lands, and at the same time reduce gradually the size of leased pastures so that lands would be available at all times for the settlers. He stated his problem clearly and concisely in a letter to Godden Son and Holme on November 4, 1905, in the following words: "We are between two fires to some extent at least, namely, people who are coming in to settle on the one hand and cattle interests on the other hand. The question arises as to what extent it is wise to go at this time in breaking up the pastures. The outlook for the sale of land at present is very good. There is a surplus of grass in the country and the outlook for leasing is not so promising."

Hobart adopted a dual policy in the management and disposition of the White Deer lands. He retained the large pastures where the land was located in solid blocks for leasing purposes, and began to fence off smaller tracts near the railroad and on the outside boundaries of the property for the stock farmers. There was a continuous conflict between the interests of these two groups in the application of this policy, but Hobart always gave preference to settlers where conditions were sufficient to warrant it. "Making sales to settlers will work a temporary hardship in some cases in regard to leases," he said, "But this is undoubtedly the right policy in the long run for the development of the property."

Hobart was not interested solely in the sale of lands; he was more concerned with the building of a colony of contented and

prosperous stock farmers. He built a hotel for the benefit of his customers; donated lands for schools and churches; offered land for the location of an agricultural experiment station and a Presbyterian college; and aided many other civic enterprises which contributed to the permanent development of the properties under his control. He was interested most of all in securing a community of honest and industrious people. "People of the right kind are what is needed to build up this country and give value to the proprietor's land, and I am doing all I can in this direction," he declared. In 1902 George Tyng gave some insight into the character of people who were needed to settle on the White Deer lands when he declared that what Pampa needed was "*a twenty-five cent meal hash house*. People who are willing to pay fifty cents a meal or for sleeping want clean beds, table cloths, napkins and good grub. That kind do not buy frontier homes four hundred feet above drinking water".³⁶

Hobart adopted the same liberal policy toward all settlers on the White Deer lands. He made no distinction because of creed or nationality. He assured Catholics that they would be treated as other denominations, and extended the same liberal policy to foreign nationalities. In 1910 four Polish families arrived at White Deer and established a settlement near the town. Other Polish families arrived later from the old town of Panna Maria, near San Antonio. This prompted Hobart to send the following advertisement to the Texas Polish News Publishing Company at San Antonio: "Some of the finest wheat lands in Texas located near the Polish settlement at White Deer in Carson County on the Santa Fe railroad. These lands are part of the famous White Deer Lands and are for sale on easy terms and at a low rate of interest".³⁷ Hobart also appealed to other Slavic peoples through the General Colonization Agent, Railway Exchange, Chicago, to come to the Texas Panhandle for one har-

³⁶ MS, C. P. Buckler, Address to Pampa Rotary Club, July, 1941. Italics are the author's.

³⁷ White Deer Files, Volume XII, p. 585.

vest season and study and investigate land conditions here with a view of making a permanent settlement. A number of Polish people came and settled within the vicinity of White Deer. This Polish settlement today forms one of the most prosperous and one of the most substantial elements among the hundreds of stock farmers on properties that were once the White Deer lands.

By 1914 more than half of the White Deer lands were in the hands of settlers who were producing an abundance of forage and small grain crops, as well as thousands of high grade cattle and fine hogs. Where George Tyng had declared in 1902 that the "people were almost as frantic as the cattle for water," by 1914 the vast underground reservoir of water had been tapped, and windmills provided sufficient water for all stock and domestic purposes. Hobart wrote in 1915 that "practically all of the people to whom we have sold lands during the past twelve years are making good. My experience is that stock farming is the safest proposition, and I can most heartily recommend it."

During and following World War I all of West Texas was being settled and developed rapidly. The war greatly increased the demand for wheat and other food stuffs, and, as a result, the grass roots of the West Texas plains were plowed under in an effort to provide high-priced wheat for the starving peoples of Europe.

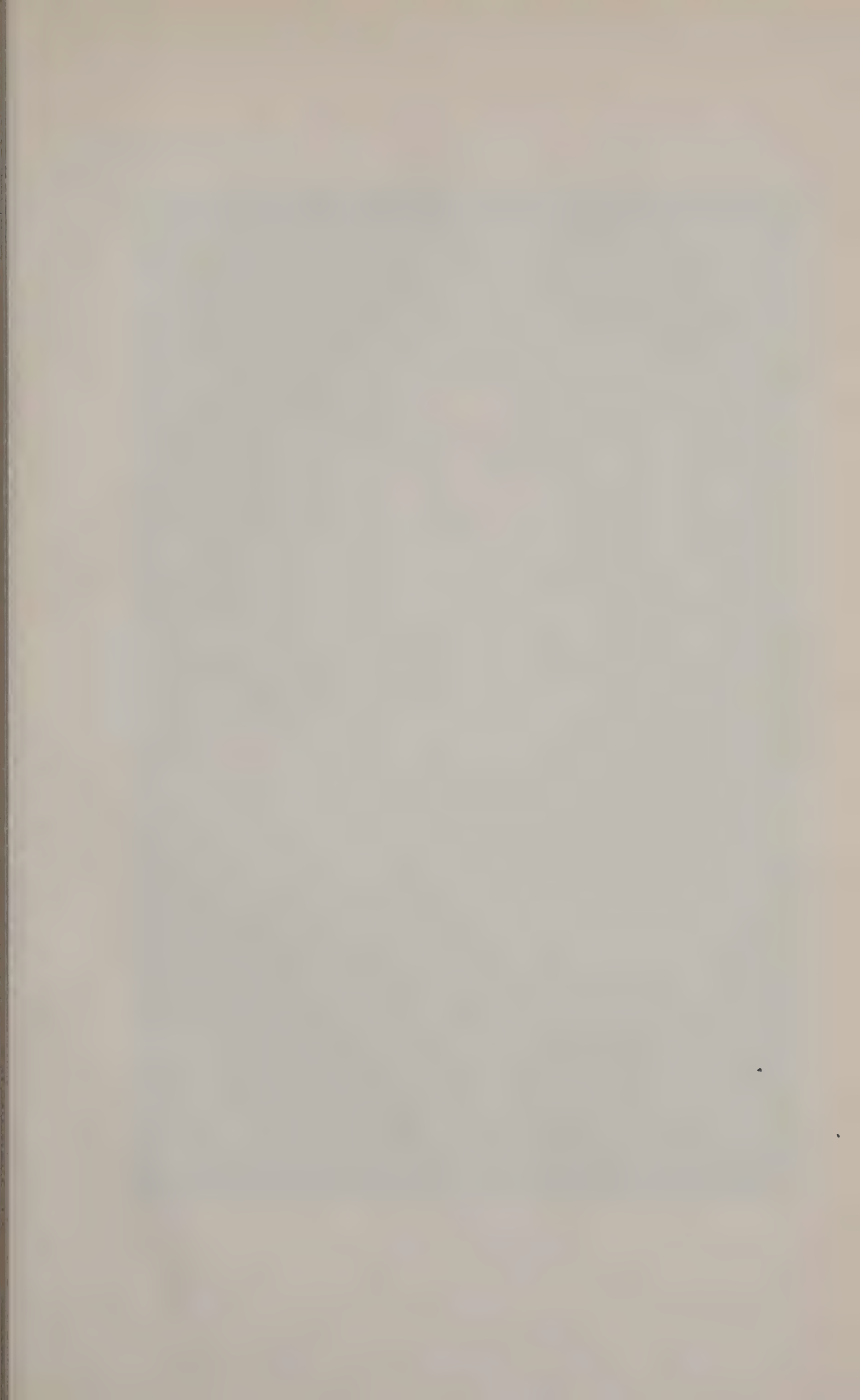
A few years after the war closed gas and oil were discovered on the White Deer lands, and they became the center of one of Texas' great gas and oil producing regions. Today the White Deer lands, and the lands adjoining them, produce seventy-six percent of the carbon black of the nation, ninety-eight percent of the helium gas of the world, vast quantities of oil, and more gas than any other region in the world.

MRS. CORNELIA ADAIR

IT WAS THE LOT of T. D. Hobart to be connected with large land and cattle corporations as long as he lived. As the years passed his reputation as a land man spread to many parts of the nation, and even to England, as a result of investments made in West Texas land by scores of individuals and corporations, both in the North and East as well as in the British Isles. Moreover, he was a land prophet with honor and confidence among his friends and neighbors in the Texas Panhandle. His years of experience in dealing with West Texas lands made him almost indispensable in making land adjustments during the transitional period from ranching to settlement.

While he was in the midst of his work in the colonization of the White Deer Lands, Hobart received a letter inviting him to visit the JA Ranch. Here for the first time he met Mrs. Cornelia Adair. "Mrs. Adair passed the meeting off merely as a social affair," wrote Hobart, "but you know ladies see farther than men do often times, and on leaving there Mrs. Hobart suggested that Mrs. Adair had something on her mind".¹ A few days later Hobart received a letter from Senator-elect James Wadsworth, Jr., of New York, which stated that it was his wish as well as that of Mrs. Adair that Hobart should assume the management of the JA Ranch and its properties. This came as a complete surprise to Hobart. After some deliberation he decided to decline the offer, and on December 15, 1914, he wrote Senator Wadsworth in reply in part as follows: "I will explain to you in a measure how I am situated here. My own personal interests are mainly situated here in this part of the Panhandle, and within the last two years I have erected quite a comfortable residence at this place (Pampa), which my family and I would dislike very much to give up. Again, I am en-

¹ T. D. Hobart to Sibley A. Pierce, Hartford, Conn., February 24, 1924.





MRS. CORNELIA ADAIR

gaged in a very interesting proposition—that of disposing of the lands of my Employer to actual settlers as far as possible, and taking everything into consideration I do not believe that it would be best for me to sever my present relations here.” On the same day he wrote Mrs. Adair: “I must say that I greatly appreciate the confidence you have expressed in me in making this suggestion and I very much regret that I do not see my way clear to accept.”

Mrs. Adair was insistent.² She requested an interview with Hobart at Clarendon and, as a result of this consultation, terms were agreed upon by which Hobart was to assume the management of the JA Ranch and at the same time retain his position with the White Deer Lands. This was the beginning of six years of the most pleasant relationship of Hobart’s entire business career.

Cornelia Wadsworth was born at Geneseo, New York, in 1837. The Wadsworth family had been prominent in New England affairs since the earliest colonial times. Members of the family served in both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. James Wadsworth, grandfather of Cornelia, moved from Durham, Connecticut, to New York in 1790. He pioneered in that state and settled at Big Tree which was then a wild frontier country.³

James Samuel Wadsworth, father of Cornelia, was born October 30, 1807. He was a student at Harvard College in 1828, studied law in Daniel Webster’s office in 1829-1830, and also spent part of the year studying law at Yale. He married into a prominent Quaker family in Philadelphia, and finally

2 “I have often thought of how I came to be employed by Mrs. Adair. After Senator Wadsworth’s election to the Senate from New York, she began to look around quietly for a new manager, and in conversation with an Englishman by the name of Finch, he told her about me. I learned afterwards that she at once followed it up by talking with Mr. Patrick, President of the First National Bank at Clarendon, Mr. Henry Taylor, Mr. Thos. Bugbee, Col. Charles Goodnight, and others. Then she sent an invitation through Finch for me to visit the Ranch.” T. D. Hobart to Major Ira H. Evans, San Diego, Cal., December 13, 1921.

3 Big Tree was later called Geneseo.

settled down at Geneseo. James Wadsworth was prominent both in state and national politics during the stormy days of the Hunkers and Barnburners. He was a member of the latter organization and was opposed to the annexation of Texas. During the Civil War he was commissioned Brigadier General. He took part in the battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, and lost his life in the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864.

In 1857 Cornelia Wadsworth married Montgomery Ritchie of Boston, a grandson of Harrison Otis. Ritchie also had military ambitions. He served as a recruiting officer under General Wadsworth, and later served on the staff of General Augur, but ill health interrupted his career and he died at Geneseo in 1864.⁴ The Ritchies had two children. One died at an early age in California. The other, Jack Ritchie, kept alive the military traditions of the family and became a Major in the Boer War, 1899-1902.⁵

In 1867 Mrs. Cornelia Ritchie attended a ball in New York City which was given in honor of United States Congressman J. C. Hughes, a friend of the Wadsworth family. Here she met John G. Adair of Queens County, Ireland, who at that time was engaged in the brokerage business in New York City. A romance developed and the couple were married in 1869.⁶ Adair owned a large estate in Ireland where he maintained a luxurious castle, Glenvaugh Castle in County, Donegal, with a large retinue of servants. He also maintained a large estate at Rathdaire Cottage in Queens County, Ireland.

In her youth Cornelia Wadsworth and her family had travelled quite extensively in Europe and she had developed a

⁴ See H. T. Burton, *A History of the JA Ranch*, pp. 17-23 for a splendid short sketch of the Wadsworth family.

⁵ M. K. Brown, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 14, 1942. Brown served at the same time and in the same Brigade as did Ritchie.

⁶ "It was always my understanding that Mrs. Adair met John Adair while fox hunting in Ireland and that they came to U.S.A. in 1869 for the purpose of buffalo hunting and that it was then that they made contact with Charles Goodnight." M. K. Brown, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 10, 1949.

liking for travel and adventure. At the time of her marriage with Adair the new West was just beginning to be opened to Anglo-Americans. Stories of the Indians and the buffalo, and of the "hunting grounds of the Great West" aroused the sporting instincts of the newly weds. In 1874 General Phil Sheridan, who had been an intimate friend of Mrs. Adair's father, sent General Richard I. Dodge of the United States Army as an escort to the Adairs on a buffalo hunting trip along the South Platte River. On this trip the party attended an Indian Council meeting in the Platte River country, and they heard that "large numbers of buffalo hides were brought into Fort Dodge last year, and that the 'trail' was lined with a double row of carcasses for miles: one man had sold 350,000 buffalo hides." All along the South Platte they saw "enormous cattle ranches. One man has a herd of 30,000; they are very profitable".⁷ From New York to Chicago on the trip west the Adairs were accompanied by a group of capitalists. The conversation of these western prospectors was "principally about stocks and mines. 'The wonderful stories I hear them telling each other of how railroads are floated are enough to make one's hair stand on end. As illustrating the wonderful resources of America, I am told of a young Scotchman who came to the states with only 2/6 (two pounds and six pence) in his pocket; at the end of ten years he owed 1,200,000 dollars. What a country!'"⁸

The Adairs were captivated with the West. They saw great economic possibilities in its virgin lands. In 1875 they returned to Denver, Colorado, where Adair established his brokerage business, and began a search for lands and cattle. It was here that Adair met Colonel Charles Goodnight, who was already well schooled in the cattle business and was thoroughly familiar with the plains region of the Southwest. A partnership was

⁷ Cornelia Adair, *My Diary*, pp. 93-98. This Diary which is now a rare item was published in Bath, England, in 1918.

⁸ Cornelia Adair, *My Diary*, pp. 21-22.

formed and as a result the now famous JA Ranch was established in the Palo Duro Canyon in the Texas Panhandle.⁹

The JA Ranch was the first Anglo-American institution to take root in the soil of the Southwest. As events later proved, the large scale investment in this ranching enterprise was destined to be the forerunner of many similar investments in land and cattle in this region by eastern and foreign capitalists. These investments played an important part in the establishment and development of the cattle industry in the Southwest, and also helped to pave the way for the settlement of this region.

The JA Ranch is one of the few ranches, of the large number of ranches that were established in West Texas, that have survived the many changes which have taken place during the past fifty years. It is also unique in that its establishment was the result of the combined efforts of an Anglo-American frontiersman and an Irish capitalist. The meeting of Adair and Goodnight was significant. Adair a tenderfoot on the plains and without knowledge or experience in the ways of the West was eagerly seeking a place for investments. Goodnight had lost one fortune in the Pueblo, Colorado, country during the Panic of 1873, but he was yet young and, with the resilience of the American frontiersman, he was in search of capital with which to make a new start in this last western frontier. His years of experience as a scout and a trail driver had made him familiar with all of the region lying between the head waters of the Red, the Colorado, and the Brazos rivers in Texas and the Purgatoire and the Arkansas rivers in Colorado. Goodnight believed that the Palo Duro Canyon, at the head of Red River in Texas, was one of the most ideal spots for a cattle ranch in the entire region. Confident that he could regain his lost fortune if he could get sufficient financial backing, Goodnight

⁹ T. D. Hobart, *The Producer*, April 22, 1922. See also J. Evetts Haley, *Colonel Charles Goodnight, Cowman and Plainsman* for an excellent account of the founding of the JA Ranch, and chapters 17 to 21 for its growth and development.

drove 1600 head of "fairly well bred cattle" and about eighty-six "supposed to be full blood Durham cows" from Pueblo, Colorado, to the Palo Duro Canyon in 1876 and established the JA Ranch.¹⁰

On June 18, 1877, Goodnight and Adair signed a five year agreement under the terms of which Goodnight was to operate the ranch in the Palo Duro for one-third interest in the land, cattle, and horses, while Adair was to furnish the money for the enterprise and retain a two-thirds interest. Goodnight who was to receive a salary of \$2500.00 per year was to repay Adair his third of the original investment at the rate of ten percent per annum at the end of the five year period.¹¹

At the end of the five year period this enterprise had proved to be far more profitable than either party had anticipated and the contract was renewed. The ranch continued to grow and expand. Goodnight established the F Ranch in 1879 in the Quitaque country in Briscoe, Swisher, and Motley counties. He bought, leased, and fenced thousands of acres together with large tracts of school land that belonged to the State of Texas. Goodnight brought under his control more than a million acres of land, and at one time 65,000 head of cattle carried the JA brand alone. Adair died before the expiration of the second contract and left his property to Mrs. Cornelia Wadsworth Adair. In 1887 Goodnight and Mrs. Adair made a division of their properties and Mrs. Adair became the sole owner of the JA Ranch properties.¹²

After the death of Colonel Adair,¹³ Mrs. Adair operated the

10 C. Goodnight, Goodnight, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, December 20, 1921.

11 For a copy of this contract and other documents see H. T. Burton, *A History of the JA Ranch*, page 28 and following.

12 T. D. Hobart, *The Producer*, April 22, 1922, p. 6; C. Goodnight, Goodnight, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, December 20, 1921; H. T. Burton, *A History of the JA Ranch*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Many people even in the Texas Panhandle confuse the JA Ranch and the Goodnight Ranch. The Goodnight Ranch was established in 1889 with headquarters at the present town of Goodnight.

13 A title which he evidently picked up on his hunting trip in the West in 1874. Mrs. Adair says in her diary: "John gains a fresh step in military rank every day. He became a Captain on the Mississippi steamboat: at Omaha he was promoted to Major: now no one calls him anything but Colonel." *My Diary*, p. 105.

ranch through managers selected by herself and paid them a salary. Although these managers had complete control of the ranch, they sought the advice of Mrs. Adair whenever possible. Mrs. Adair spent much time at the ranch and she studied carefully all audits and reports that were made. As a result she was thoroughly familiar with many of the details in the operation of the ranch. During the period from 1887 to 1915 the Ranch managers spent much time in consolidating the holdings of Mrs. Adair, and by 1915 the JA lands were in one solid block with the exception of the Howard Ranch which is still within the JA Ranch properties.¹⁴

The JA lands lie in and along the scenic Palo Duro Canyon at the head of the Red River. This canyon extending from Canyon to Clarendon, a distance of about sixty miles, cuts a deep gorge far back into the northeastern edge of the Llano Estacado. The canyon varies in width from one to fifteen miles, and has a depth varying from 200 to about 1300 feet. The steep canyon wall is skirted on both sides by rolling plains which are covered with grasses, sage brush, shinnery, skunk brush, mesquite, scrub cedar, cottonwood, hackberry, and china berry. This makes it an ideal location for a ranch, since the canyons and breaks furnish grass, water, and shelter during the winter months, while the uplands furnish excellent pasturage for stock during the spring and summer seasons.

When Hobart took charge of the JA Ranch it was operated by much the same machinery and methods that had been used since the ranch was first established in 1876, although improved methods of transportation and communication, as well as pressure from the settlements on the outside of the range, had wrought some changes in the administration of the affairs of the ranch. In 1915 the JA Ranch consisted of about 550,000

¹⁴ The following were the managers of the JA Ranch from 1887 to 1935: J. E. Farrington, 1887-1890; Arthur Tisdale, 1890-1891; Richard Walsh, 1892-1910; John Summerfield, 1910-1911; Jas. Wadsworth, Jr., 1911-1915; T. D. Hobart, 1915-1935. T. D. Hobart, *The Producer*, April 1922, p. 8.

acres of land, 25,000 head of cattle, some 400 head of horses, and about forty employees. In addition to the well improved headquarters which Colonel Goodnight had established in 1878, the ranch was divided into fifty-eight pastures ranging in size from a few hundred acres to 68,000 acres. There were seventeen camps and twenty branding corrals scattered at convenient places over the range. The ranch was watered by numerous springs and streams, supplemented by fifty-eight wells with windmills, and thirty-four artificial ponds or tanks, and there were about 500 miles of wire fence and more than 150 miles of telephone wire connecting the various camps with headquarters and with the outside world. There were two cattle herds on the ranch—the JJ herd of purebreds which furnished breeders for the main or common herd which carried the JA brand.¹⁵

The personnel of the ranch included a manager, a wagon boss, a cook, horse wrangler, bookkeeper, some half dozen farmers, and about thirty men who looked after the cattle, rode fence, fixed windmills, dug tanks, and did various other kinds of work necessary on a large cattle ranch. The ranch was primarily a ranching enterprise just as it had been since 1876. The methods of procedure in the operation of the ranch had been modified mainly by wire fences, windmills, and railroads. Since it was located in the rough country of Armstrong, Biscoe, Donley, and Hall counties, it was less affected by the changes incident to settlement than were the uplands.

Mrs. Adair was no longer satisfied with the old methods of operating the ranch. She believed that the encroachment of the settlements and the changes produced by World War I, along with other changes incident to that great struggle, had outmoded the old methods of procedure, and she was anxious to bring about a complete reorganization of the whole ranch

¹⁵ Summary report made by T. D. Hobart in Hobart Letter Files; Clinton Henry, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, April 11, 1941.

machinery. She felt that the boundaries of the ranch needed to be more accurately determined and land titles made more secure; that there was too much discrepancy between tally sheets and the actual count of cattle; that overhead should be reduced by developing more of the agricultural lands on the ranch, and that the ranch should be reorganized and improved generally. Moreover, in 1915 she was seriously considering the sale of the entire ranch properties. She feared the insecurity in land titles because of inaccurate surveys, and she wanted to gather up the loose ends and bring about a more efficient management of the affairs of the ranch. "I want very much to reduce the expenditures of the Ranch as much as I can," she wrote Hobart. "I feel convinced from everything I see here, that there will be some sort of financial collapse at the end of the war, and I want to be in a position to meet it, by having got my Ranch up to the highest point of production and the lowest point of expenditure. . . . I have always thought that considering we do not fatten any cattle for the market, we use too much cottonseed cake. Perhaps you will be able to effect some reduction in this".¹⁶

Hobart assumed his duties as manager of the JA Ranch with his usual caution and careful judgment. Temporarily he continued in the main the policy of his predecessors in the operation of the ranch. There was an indebtedness of \$350,000.00 against the ranch and he studied carefully plans for the sale of the ranch properties. He concluded that on account of the "pronounced differences in the topography and the variety of the soils" that no set rules could be adopted with reference to the sale of the lands. He continued the practice, therefore, of selling "on the outside edges in view of the fact that the cattle interests always had to be considered in disposing of the lands. "Care should be taken," he said, "to reserve sufficient farming

¹⁶ Mrs. Cornelia Adair, London, England, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, June 22, 1916.

land adjacent to the caprock to be included in sales of large quantities of pasture lands."

However, Hobart advised against the sale of the JA lands until the matter of boundaries were more accurately determined. On the subject of surveys he wrote Mrs. Adair in London as follows:

The outside boundaries of your property should be definitely located and marked and, for this reason, I do not recommend the sale of large bodies of the main ranch until this work has been accomplished and any possible conflict with parties on the outside adjusted. In connection with the establishment of the outside boundary, a system of base lines should be located across the property at suitable intervals with a view of making a reasonable accurate classification of the land, location of pastures, camps, watering places etc., and with special reference of determining the existence of possible conflicts and vacancies so that your interests may be fully protected. . . .

I understand that a classification has been made by Mr. Somerfield (Summerfield), but I am at a loss to understand how he was able to arrive at anything like an accurate classification of much of your property unless he had a great amount of data unknown to me. I understand he did some considerable surveying in that locality at an early day, but at that day and time permanent water was one of the controlling considerations rather than quality of land. . . .

I find in some instances that boundaries have been established by agreement, and I take it that this is satisfactory as far as it has gone, but with the outside boundaries definitely marked we would know at once whether anyone was encroaching on your rights.¹⁷

Hobart's discoveries were not surprising to Mrs. Adair. The gradual approach of the settlers to the boundaries of the ranch had been a matter of much concern to her for years and she realized the importance of getting the boundaries of the ranch determined accurately without further delay. In reply to Hobart's suggestions she wrote him from London declaring that,

I am not surprised that you have had some little trouble. . . . over the boundaries. . . . The way these boundaries were arranged originally used to be a great anxiety to Mr. Adair, he was always afraid there would be trouble about them. . . . I am sure you will have many tormenting problems about the survey, as I know how awfully casually it was made in the olden times. That survey must have been made in '76-'77 when conditions were very rough, but I am sure that you will be able to straighten things out, and the very fact

¹⁷ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Mrs. Cornelia Adair, London, September 29, 1915, and May 11, 1916. Hobart Letter Files.

of these questions cropping up shows the absolute necessity of this survey, as the country is getting settled up. . . . When I appointed Mr. Summerfield some years ago as General Manager I did so because he had a great deal to do with the surveying of the land when it was originally bought by Adair and Goodnight, and I knew that he had valued for the Texas Land & Mortgage Company for many years and that his valuations were considered by that most successful Company to be very correct.¹⁸

In 1916 E. H. Homeyer of Austin, Texas, was employed to locate the outside boundaries of the ranch and to establish base lines on all of the ranch properties. Hobart's long years of experience in supervising land surveys were of inestimable value to him in conducting this survey. Homeyer found many vacancies and some overlapping boundaries. However, when his work was completed the boundaries of the ranch were accurately determined for the first time since the ranch was established in 1876.¹⁹

Mrs. Adair was also anxious to do away with the old haphazard methods of keeping the records of the ranch. She studied these records carefully and familiarized herself with the detailed operations of the JA properties. Her long years of experience with cattle and the ranching business convinced her that ranching operations in the twentieth century had undergone great changes since the previous century and, therefore, she felt the necessity of adopting more business-like methods of procedure. She was especially anxious to see the tally sheets of the ranch harmonized with the actual count of cattle on the ranges.

Cattle are too valuable now, she declared, to have any discrepancy. That is one of the principal reasons that I went to the expense of having the Ranch fenced off into smaller pastures, so that if 1,000 cows were given to the care of a man in any of the camps, that man should account for all of them in some way, either their skins if dead should be given up, or some reason given as to why the cows were not there. . . . but it is difficult to get the old-time cowman

¹⁸ Mrs. Cornelia Adair, London, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, September 25, 1916; January 4 and July 16, 1917. Hobart Letter Files.

¹⁹ "I believe the best things Mr. Hobart did probably were the complete and accurate survey and mapping of the Ranch and marking land corners, and also paying off the old mortgage, and above all the kindly influence he brought to bear on the entire personnel and neighbors." Whitfield Carhart, Greenville, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June, 1937.

to realize the importance of an accurate count in view of the very high price of cattle. . . . It seems to me absolutely folly to have that large herd of very valuable cattle and not have them much more carefully looked after now that their value has doubled. . . . I do not see why, now that the Ranch is divided into these comparatively small pastures, the exact number in each pasture could not be ascertained. If it can be proved that it *is* impossible, I am open to conviction, and would like to have the pastures further divided. . . . It is not worth while grading up the cattle as Mr. Walsh did, and buying these most expensive bulls, only to see the herd very much reduced. . . . I am of course very anxious to keep up good quality in the cattle and to develop the place generally as a breeding Ranch. I have no desire simply to take as much money out of the place as I can, but am keenly interested in its development and improvement, as I consider the prosperity of Texas is only now really beginning, and I suppose I have known the conditions of the State longer than most people.²⁰

Hobart had been familiar with the old, inaccurate methods of reckoning by tally sheets on ranches since he first came to Texas. He knew especially about the Rocking Chair steal and he was determined that no cattle would ever be lost in this manner from the JA's without his knowledge. He inaugurated a plan, therefore, of tallying the cattle on the JA's every two years in order to keep a correct account of the herd. No person on the ranch or their friends were ever used to do the work of counting and tallying. Only disinterested persons who knew cattle were employed for this purpose.²¹ Moreover, Hobart began at once to improve the herds by getting rid of the "Arizonas",²² and by selling off the old cattle in both the JJ and the main herds. He built more fences, branding corrals, camps, windmills and tanks. He added greatly to the water supply of the ranch by piping water from springs and streams to nearby pastures and by building dams for impounding water from rainfall. Within a few years after Hobart assumed management of the ranch both the JJ and the JA herds began to

²⁰ Mrs. Cornelia Adair to T. D. Hobart from Glenvaugh Castle, Ireland, August 28 and September 5, 1915; from London, March 19, July 6, and November 18, 1915. Hobart Letter Files.

²¹ Clinton Henry, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, April 11, 1941.

²² Arizona cattle that had been purchased from the American Livestock and Loan Company. "They are the first thing that a prospective purchaser notices in going through the range and certainly do not add to the reputation of your cattle," wrote Hobart to Mrs. Adair.

show marked improvement. Moreover, more accurate records were being kept of the number of cattle on the ranch as well as the annual sales, increase etc.

Hobart kept Mrs. Adair fully informed as to every improvement and transaction that was made on the ranch. He often sent photographs of scenes on the ranch, especially where changes and improvements had been made. His letters to her describe weather conditions, condition of the cattle and of the range, land transactions, financial statements, detailed information about the personnel of the ranch, calf brandings and cattle sales, social affairs, and many other incidents connected with the operation of the ranch.

Although Mrs. Adair spent most of the time in England and Ireland she manifested a keen interest in all of the affairs of the ranch, and largely through Hobart's letters she kept in constant touch with the ranch operations until the time of her death. "I can never have too many letters from the ranch," she wrote, "I am always anxious to hear every detail concerning the employees, the people, the lands, and the herds, and if I get a letter every day in the year it would never be too much. I have had such delightful and such interesting associations with that property ever since we first bought it, so many years ago, and the vicissitudes of management, culminating now so successfully, have been very absorbing. . . . I am grateful for all the kindnesses that everyone in that country has shown me".²³

The pinch of the war in Europe greatly lessened the food supply and also pulled heavily on the purse strings of the people. The submarine menace and the consequent shortage of food in the British Isles forced the people to turn all lands possible into cultivation. Mrs. Adair, who always kept abreast the times, turned her Irish estate into a truck garden and a poultry yard. In a letter to Hobart on this subject she said:

I have developed vegetable growing to such a degree in Ireland that now we never have to buy any vegetables and have a constant supply of the very

²³ Mrs. Cornelia Adair, London, to M. K. Brown, Palo Duro, Texas, January 2, 1917.

best, including potatoes . . . onions, beets, turnips etc. . . . They are paying ten cents apiece for eggs here. I don't have to buy any as I did make arrangements at my Irish farm to have plenty of hens, which have a warm place to live in the winter. . . . I think a tremendous effort should be made everywhere to increase production. I am doing it everywhere I can in Ireland. . . . We are almost cleared out of pigs in Ireland 55,000 less than there were a year ago. . . . Now we have no butter and no margarine and I am not allowed to buy it in Ireland where there is plenty. The meat supply is also very short fortunately we have rabbits, venison and chickens from our own places so we are not doing so badly.²⁴

Conditions in Europe and the increasing world shortage of food caused Mrs. Adair to reflect much on the agricultural possibilities of her estate in the Texas Panhandle. In all of her plans for the sale of the ranch her first consideration was to divide it among settlers who would develop the agricultural lands. In 1916 she wrote Hobart that she did not "wish to sell the ranch as a whole to some speculator who would only think of money making I would much rather sell it by degrees in smaller tracts that will become homes" and be used for grazing and agriculture. Moreover, her success in supplying food from her Irish estate led her to believe that the JA Ranch could produce much of its own food supply by means of irrigation. She proposed, therefore, to try an irrigation project for that purpose. In writing Hobart about the project she was sure that "we might have some trouble at the Ranch, insects and animals might eat them, but still it would be well worth trying. Tomatoes grow so easily out there and are such a delicious thing. If they would save all the tins they have instead of throwing them away they would be able to put up any amount of tomatoes if we had some irrigation. It has seemed to me that it might not be a bad plan to have a camp near the Dutch Canyon there

²⁴ "Would it interest you to hear the rations we are on now?"

Bread, eight ounces per head per day

Meat, eleven ounces per head per week

Bacon, five ounces per head per week

Butter, four ounces per head per week

Sugar, eight ounces per head per week

Lard, suet, cheese are not rationed yet, but they are all extremely hard to get. 1/4 of a pound of lard was all we could get last week for a household of eight. But we are alright, and can stand a great deal more." Mrs. Cornelia Adair, Rathdaire, Ireland, to T. D. Hobart, April 20, 1918.

was so much good flow of water there, which would be useful."

The JA Ranch was challenging to Mrs. Adair, but as age crept upon her, she was forced to give more serious consideration to some final plan for the disposal of the property. She wrote Hobart in 1918 that she had about decided to sell the ranch. There were three things, however, that kept her undecided about the sale of the property for the remainder of her lifetime: the sentimental value attached to the ranch, the rapidly increasing taxes on both sides of the Atlantic as a result of World War I, and the prospects of finding oil on the property. "I hate to think of parting with this property," she wrote Hobart, "which has been a care and anxiety, but the greatest pride and joy to me, and if I were younger I should struggle on with it. . . . I think it is wonderful how that property has come through all these long years of stress and prosperity and changes of one sort or another. . . . But I feel that it cannot go on forever. . . . I have been thinking lately a great deal about the advisability of selling as much as I can or at any rate of having the matter arranged. I am so afraid that after my death things might not be so easy for my executors, though I have done everything I can to make them so. Also I like very much to see what becomes of my land".²⁵

In 1918 Hobart was receiving inquiries on every hand about the sale of JA lands, but the pressure of the war crisis in Europe forced the people of England to turn their entire effort to the Western front. "England," wrote Mrs. Adair, "is one great camp now and one's only idea is to give these soldiers every chance. . . . We are very anxious just now about the War (June, 1918), the Germans have such enormous reserves brought from the Eastern front. Of course here in Ireland the government has been too miserably weak, it is all a question of votes in Parliament, the Irish Nationalist vote has held the balance of power so long."

²⁵ Mrs. Cornelia Adair, Rathdaire, Ireland, to T. D. Hobart, April 9, 1918.

Mrs. Adair's whole efforts were absorbed in winning the war in Europe. She was instrumental in arranging a YMCA Hostel and a Canteen for soldiers. She made liberal donations to the Red Cross and YMCA both in England and in America; she offered her home in Clarendon, Texas, for use of the Red Cross;²⁶ she gave liberal donations for the erection of a YMCA building and a Sanitarium at Clarendon, Texas; she rented her London home and lived as frugally as possible in order to help the war effort. "In fact," she wrote, "everything that is left when I have paid the taxes and small living expenses goes to help the war in some way."

By the end of the war taxes were a matter of serious concern to the owner of property on two continents. In spite of everything that could be done taxes "doubled" and "tripled" with prospects of further increases. "I do hope you and Mr. Peter will put your heads together and do all you can to help me about this tax question, both here and in America," she wrote Hobart. In 1919 Hobart invested \$3000.00 of Mrs. Adair's money in the Victory Loan in this country. "I am very glad you have done this," she wrote, "but I do not mean to put anything into the Victory Loan here in England, as it only means giving this wasteful extravagant government more opportunities of wasting the money of the public. A great many people over here feel the same way, and from what I see in the papers there is no enthusiasm at all about this loan on that account. The different members of the Cabinet, Winston Churchill, Bonar Law and others are hopelessly extravagant, and all their extravagance adds to our taxation."

At the close of the war the tax question came to be closely related to the lease and sale of lands on the JA Ranch. In February, 1919, Hobart wrote Mrs. Adair that there was quite an

²⁶ "I have been thinking so much that I should like to feel that the Walsh House in Clarendon (Texas) was being of some more use than it is at present. I would like you to offer the use of it from me to the Red Cross in Clarendon as a headquarters depot. . . . I should feel happy to think that the house was being of some use. . . . They could hang a Red Cross flag outside the house if they liked" she wrote Hobart.

excitement in oil "which seems to center in Burkburnet and Ranger (Texas). The oil excitement in the vicinity of Amarillo seems to be approaching fever heat. So far as I can learn the only grounds on which it is based are the reports of some geologists and the fact that they have bored a well producing gas some 30 miles north of Amarillo. . . . It is claimed that the gas produced from this well is what is termed 'wet gas' and it is a strong indication of oil. I am not an expert in the oil business and give it for what it is worth. Many oil leases are being made and lots of people will lose money if oil is not found."

Mrs. Adair became much excited about oil prospects in the Texas Panhandle. She spent several months at the JA Ranch during the winter of 1919-1920. But when the opportunity came to lease her lands for oil she declined on account of the excess profits tax and other taxes in England. "I am as public spirited as anyone," she wrote Hobart, "but I do not propose to turn myself into an orphan asylum altogether. . . . I would not like to give the people in the country an anti-British bias. To anyone who inquired (about leases) might it not be well to say that I am reserving my decision until I come out in the autumn. That will stave off the people for the present without annoying them, the worst they can think is that I am rather unreasonable, and I think the Americans always expect a woman to be rather unreasonable anyway."

Mrs. Adair had planned to come to America in 1919 for the purpose of disposing of her estate, but with the prospects of oil she believed the price of land would be materially advanced, especially if she sold without retaining any of the mineral rights. But in refusing to sell she was faced with a dilemma. As has been stated, she had always been interested in the development of the Texas Panhandle country, and she wanted to see her lands sold to actual settlers. "As you know it is not my wish to interfere with the development of the country in any way," she wrote Hobart, "In fact I have always clamored

to sell the outlying portions of my estate before there was any question of oil being found. I do not want to be considered a landowner who refuses to sell." Mrs. Adair had been consistently opposed to selling the property all in one body for fear it would fall into the hands of speculators. To sell might mean the sacrifice of an immense fortune after years of toil and struggle and vicissitudes. Moreover, if the property sold immediately following the war it would be subject to heavy taxation both in England and in America. She decided, therefore, to keep the property and begin the search for oil.

A geologist was employed who inspected the property and made his report. Mrs. Adair manifested much interest in the report and commented that "although it is doubtful about the results of our boring for oil, it does not alter my determination to do so, and to begin as soon as possible, where you all think the best place. . . . I don't think I could spend money in a better way than this which will mean increased production of oil, anyway testing it." Consequently the JA Oil Company was formed and Hobart reported that many people in the surrounding country were anxious to take stock in the company.

After spending several months on her Texas ranch, Mrs. Adair sailed for England in April, 1921, on what proved to be her last voyage across the Atlantic. It was a rough voyage, but the storms at sea and the "rolling ships" did not deter this world traveller from booking passage to America again in the following September or October. "I am just longing to get back to the Ranch," she wrote Hobart, "I feel as if that were my real home."²⁷ We were so happy there this year, and also in New York that last week with so many of my relations, and I don't think I was in such spirits for years. . . . We are making our plans to come out in October as we feel we cannot wait any longer, and are both very anxious to see what is happening. I

²⁷ Miss Joan Royce of England was the companion and attendant of Mrs. Adair for years. "She always knew just what I wanted to say" wrote Mrs. Adair.

know you will keep us informed from week to week with all the thrilling things that come up, and it will be so nice if everybody will push it on and try as well as they can. I suppose I might be the more patient if I was twenty years younger, but it will be so dreadful if I am not allowed to see the oil."

The exciting incidents connected with the "oil boom" in the Texas Panhandle increased the tempo of life for the Queen of the Palo Duro and her energy, zeal, and ambitions were dampened only by her lengthening years and ill health. Such incidents were a fitting climax for one whose life had been filled with so much action and adventure. But time was fast taking its toll and she was to be denied what was perhaps one of the most cherished ambitions of her life—to visit Texas and the Palo Duro again. On September 22, 1921, Hobart received a cablegram announcing the passing of his friend and employer.

The passing of Mrs. Adair had a profound effect upon her friends and associates of long standing in the Texas Panhandle. A memorial service was held at Clarendon on the same day of her funeral in England. "It was a beautiful service," wrote Hobart, "and one of the most touching incidents was the presence of Mr. Charles Goodnight, now past eighty-five, and Mr. Bugbee, nearly eighty, seated side by side at the front." Colonel Goodnight wrote a few weeks later that "The death of Mr. Loving and Mrs. Adair has affected me more with the exception of my mother than any that ever occurred during my long life." The long years of association between Goodnight and Mrs. Adair had developed a deep and abiding mutual friendship. Mrs. Adair had a profound respect for Colonel Goodnight and in many of her letters she spoke of him with almost tender affection. "There was a lady of world-wide experience, and yet she had not lost faith in human nature," said Mr. Henry Coke of Dallas, after reading her last will and testament. "One of the noblest characters I have ever known has passed away," wrote T. D. Hobart, and with her passing six years of pleasant and

harmonious relationships in the management of the oldest institution in the Texas Panhandle came to an end.

The death of Mrs. Adair marked a significant event in the history of the Texas Panhandle. It was the end of chapter one in the development of Anglo-American institutions in Northwest Texas. As a young woman in 1877 Mrs. Adair had ridden the entire distance from Pueblo, Colorado, to the Palo Duro Canyon on horseback and there the Goodnights and the Adairs staked their fortunes on the future of the Palo Duro. As the years passed Mrs. Adair became more and more attached to this her first love. It came to be a part of her very being. She loved its prairies, its hills and canyons, and its vast herds. She held in highest esteem the hundreds of people who had been connected with her in this great ranching enterprise. "She frequently expressed a desire that her last resting place might be in the little cemetery near the headquarters".²⁸

The Adairs and the Goodnights have passed on but their works have lived after them. The JA Ranch is still intact and it is a symbol of an age that is past. Its roots lie deeper in the plains soil than any other Anglo-American institution in the Southwest, while on all sides of it have grown up prosperous settlements, thriving towns, and busy industries. The JA Ranch has always been one of the largest institutions in the Texas Panhandle, and it has played an important part in the development of the region. It is the parent of all other Panhandle ranches.

Mr. Whitfield Carhart, who was for years an employee of the JA Ranch, has admirably summed up the part that this ranch has played through the years in the development of the Panhandle in the following words:

The JA Ranch has been one of the largest organizations in the Panhandle ever since I was a small child. The surrounding country is full of men who at one time or another have been on its payroll and connected with it in some way. Judging by my own feelings, all of these persons have a feeling of

²⁸ T. D. Hobart, *The Producer*, April, 1922, p. 8.

comradeship and affection for the old ranch. It has helped many persons to start in life and it has been a boon to the business of the nearby towns where supplies were purchased because it was always the policy of the management to 'trade at home' as far as possible. If the ranch had not been there the small adjacent towns would have missed a lot of business and some would no doubt have suffered seriously. The ranch used the land that was unfit for farming and by raising cattle maintained an industry that was probably the only use that could have been made of this land. It has always seemed to me like a mother organization that for all these years has gone on giving employment to the young fellows and after awhile graduating them, but leaving its imprint. It has been an old and honored institution in the hearts of the old timers and it seems as though it ought to go on and always be there.²⁹

The JA Ranch was located as a part of the West Texas frontier. It was developed in an age of corporate enterprise where the individual had full freedom and initiative. This institution represents the best thought and energy of scores of people who have had a part in its operation and management. The fabric of the institution has been woven by the brawn and muscle of hundreds of cowboys who have ridden its ranges to look after hundreds of thousands of cattle that have sought shelter in its canyons and have grazed over its hills and in its valleys for almost three quarters of a century. Its rough, almost inaccessible canyons have protected much of it from man's destructive hand and have preserved it as one of nature's beauty spots in the very midst of a teeming modern culture.

Today the JA Ranch, comprising about 400,000 acres, like all other similar institutions, faces a new era. An era in which the trend of the times seems to be away from free enterprise and toward government regulation and control; an era in which man continues his conquest of nature by improved methods of travel and communication; an age in which the forces of modern science continue to reveal the hidden resources even of semi-arid lands. What effect these changes will have on the JA Ranch and all kindred institutions is left for the historian of the future to record.

²⁹ Whitfield Carhart, Greenville, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June, 1937.

THE JA RANCH

THE DEATH of Mrs. Cornelia Adair in 1921 brought about a complete change in the administration of the affairs of the JA Ranch. The will of Mrs. Adair revealed that she had property on both sides of the Atlantic. Moreover, her will provided for the distribution of her Texas properties to a number of individuals, churches, and civic organizations in England, Ireland, and Texas. These properties ranged from a few thousand dollars to several hundred thousand dollars to each beneficiary. In addition to the primary legatees, who were to receive stated sums of money, there were several residuary legatees who were to inherit whatever real properties were left after the money legatees had been paid off.¹

Matters were further complicated by the fact that the properties of the Estate in Texas, England, and Ireland were undivided. Therefore, immediately after the death of Mrs. Adair, the state and federal governments in the United States, and the tax authorities in England, demanded several hundred thousand dollars in taxes and death duties. The burden of paying these taxes fell upon the American Estate. The will of Mrs. Adair made T. D. Hobart and the late Henry C. Coke of Dallas, Texas, independent executors without bond to execute her will in the distribution of her properties in this country, and also to settle the affairs of the Estate in England and in Ireland. This gave the executors complete control over her properties and permitted them to dispose of them at any time and in any manner they saw fit, so long as they considered such action to be to the best interests of all the legatees concerned.

The will also provided for a Public Trustee in England who

¹ Codicil of the Will, Hobart Letter Files, Pampa, Texas. The information for this chapter was secured almost entirely from the thousands of letters in the JA Letter Files of T. D. Hobart at Pampa, Texas. These letters contain a vast amount of information concerning the operation of the JA Ranch during the period under consideration. All references are to these letters and all quotations are taken therefrom.

was to act as an intermediary between the legatees of the Estate and the British government on the one hand, and the legatees and the American executors on the other. Many of the legatees also employed law firms, both in this country and in England, to represent them in the division of the JA properties. The execution of the will, therefore, involved many differences of opinion, legal technicalities, and even questions of international law. This required men well versed in law, skilled in diplomacy, tactful in dealing with people, patient, persevering, understanding, and tolerant.

The Texas properties in 1921 consisted of some 427,000 acres of land which grazed from 20,000 to 30,000 head of cattle. It was fenced and cross fenced into more than fifty pastures, with nineteen camps and farms, and had numerous corrals scattered over the range for branding purposes. The ranch was well equipped with wagons, tools, machinery, trucks and automobiles. It was watered by numerous springs and tanks, and had more than sixty wells.² The Estate also had a right-of-way extending from the northern boundary of the ranch to Ashtola on the Fort Worth and Denver Railway where it had adequate pastures and pens for shipping purposes. Much of the improvements on the ranch, such as the development of water facilities, building reservoirs, fences etc. were made during the first part of Hobart's administration.

Hobart's management of the JA Ranch had been highly satisfactory to all parties concerned during the lifetime of Mrs. Adair. Immediately after her death he realized that he and Coke had a most delicate and difficult task to perform. On December 31, 1921, he wrote Coke: "We have been instructed by the Public Trustee to take necessary steps to prove the will in this country. Estate duty is payable in England upon all 'moveable' property on the ranch. e. g. furniture, cattle, motor cars, etc. The English Executor is liable in the first place for

² T. D. Hobart to Charles A. Fisk, Amarillo, Texas, April 28, 1934.

this duty, but is entitled to recover it from the American Executors."

This was the beginning of a long-drawn-out and complicated correspondence between the American Executors, the Public Trustee, and the British revenue authorities that was to extend over more than a dozen years. This made it necessary for the American Executors to send representatives to England on three different occasions to explain to the British revenue authorities and to the British legatees the difficult problems which confronted the American Executors in the execution of the will.

From the very beginning the British revenue authorities began to insist upon the payment of death duties and taxes. British beneficiaries also began to press the matter of the payment of all or part of their legacies. In 1922 the law firm of Freshfields, Leese, and Munns cabled from London for \$200,000.00. Coke replied that the money was not available. He wrote the London firm that, "In order to wisely administer this estate, it is essential that the estate's representatives on both sides of the ocean should know just the situation of the entire estate. You must know just our situation with reference to the raising of money, and the obligations resting upon us here, and we in turn must know your requirements. Otherwise I am afraid we will soon get into a tangle that might work injury to the estate".³

The executors faced serious difficulties in the administrative affairs of the ranch from the beginning. The year 1922 was an unusually hard year. Continued dry weather, scarcity of grass and forage crops, the slump in cattle prices, and the decline of markets generally made it difficult, if not impossible, to work out a definite policy of procedure. Hobart advised the English representatives that the only means of raising money was by the sale of lands or cattle, or both; that to make sales at that

³ Henry C. Coke, Dallas, Texas, to Freshfields, Leese, and Munns, London, February 11, 1922.

time would be like throwing away a large part of the value of the property, since the cattle business was at the lowest ebb it had been for many years, and there was practically no sale for cattle. He called attention to the fact that industries of all kinds were at a standstill as a result of the chaotic conditions following the World War, but he confidently believed that better times were ahead. Therefore, he urged both sides to come to an understanding in order that all parties concerned might profit more in the end.

The above advice and information did not prevent the firm of Freshfield, Leese, and Munns from again appealing to the American Executors for the payment of a legacy to the Irish Church which the will named in the list of beneficiaries. Coke, in reply to this appeal, wrote the firm that,

At the present time it is impossible to pay interest on the legacies given by Mrs. Adair's will, and especially impossible to make any prophecy as to the future. . . . The handling of this ranch under present conditions, with its immense tax liability both here and abroad, is a most difficult performance, and there is no possible hope of working it out unless the persons interested are patient and will submit to considerable delay. . . . If we sell any considerable number of cattle, the money will be absorbed in repaying this indebtedness and taxes due this and the British Government, and we will greatly reduce the revenue from the ranch without proportionately reducing the cost of operation. . . . This is an exceedingly unwieldly property, and it seems to us there is but one solution, and that is to await opportunities and avail ourselves of them as they arise. It is impossible at the present time to formulate any plans that we would feel assurance of realizing. . . . Delay in liquidating this property and winding up this trust is of course very distasteful to the legatees, but not half so much as to the executors.

Coke also called attention to the fact that the handling of the ranch after Mrs. Adair's death was a very different proposition from the handling of it during her lifetime. "She had no encumbrances and a comparatively small floating debt, whereas the executors take it charged, on behalf of the British Government, the United States Government and that of Texas, with an encumbrance of \$700,000.00 and \$800,000.00 for

taxes. The only possible solution in this case is patience and delay".⁴

Conditions were so uncertain at the end of World War I that it was difficult for the executors to formulate any definite plans. For two years, therefore, they adopted a policy of watchful waiting and hoped that times would get better. Hobart began at once to reduce the operating expenses of the ranch and to try to devise some means of raising the necessary revenue to pay death duties and taxes in England and America. In 1923 the cattle business began to improve and Hobart believed that some plan of operation should be worked out and adopted. Ranch problems began to weigh heavily upon his mind. In 1923 he wrote Coke that, in his opinion, it was time to work out some definite plan of operation. "Sometimes when I get to thinking about it (the ranch) I wish very much we had it off our hands. It might not be an unwise thing for us to get together and figure out some plan to work this, for we are not getting anywhere at the present rate, and we are both of us too old to have this thing indefinitely hanging over us. We have been waiting for two years now for things to improve, and during that time there has been little or no improvement. When we have tested the oil proposition we will then be in a position to form a reliable guess of what we have to deal with, and figure on some plan for dealing with it".⁵

Hobart was at all times considering the welfare of the legatees. His greatest desire was to make a settlement of the estate that would be entirely satisfactory to all of the legatees from the largest to the smallest, and at the same time carry out a trust that was imposed upon him by a loyal friend who had passed on. He was highly sensitive to the least desires of the

⁴ Henry C. Coke, Dallas, Texas, to Freshfields, Leese, and Munns, London, May 26, 1923; Coke to Mrs. Montague Eliot, London, May 26, 1923.

⁵ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Henry C. Coke, Dallas, Texas, July 20, 1923.

legatees, and he did everything that was humanly possible to allay their anxieties during the most trying period the ranch had ever experienced. Moreover, Hobart knew that it was the wish of Mrs. Adair that the ranch should not be sold in one block, but that it should be sold in small tracts to settlers. He felt that to cut the JA lands into small tracts and parcel them out to settlers on long time payments would be an "interminable proposition." "I have been working on the White Deer Lands, a proposition of 631,000 acres, for a little over twenty years," he wrote, "and the job is not quite finished yet. This proposition has been a success far beyond what the owners originally anticipated, but think of the time required to work it out." Hobart also observed that it was becoming more and more difficult to hold large properties together. He believed that the tendencies of the times were against large land holdings and that the days of large ranches were numbered.⁶

Coke's illness in 1924 left Hobart with the entire management of the affairs of the JA Ranch. He was kept busy trying to satisfy the demands of the legatees for the payments of bequests, and to prevent tax hunters from overevaluating the lands and properties of the ranch. At the same time he was trying to keep sufficient money on hand to pay the operating expenses and numerous other details connected with the administration of the affairs of the ranch.

Yet in spite of these difficulties the management of the JA Ranch was intriguing to Hobart. He realized fully the potential value of the property, especially if times would get better and if oil could be found on the ranch lands. With the opening of a vast oil field on the lands that had once belonged to the White Deer Company, which lie just fifty miles north of the JA Ranch, he could easily vision the possible wealth of

⁶ "In my opinion, the days of the very large ranches in Texas are pretty well numbered. They will, of course, hold on for some years yet, but the tendency of the times seems to be all against them." T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Henry C. Coke, Dallas, Texas, July 2, 1923.

the lands now under his control. "I cannot entirely divert myself of the idea that it is possible that oil can be found on the ranch," he wrote Coke, "and it would be such a boon to the people interested and to ourselves if this occurred that I do not want any chance, even remote, to get by us." But after making two or three tests for oil on the ranch he concluded that, "we had better give up our dreams of a great oil estate, and get down to grass and dirt and calves." Hobart decided that 1926 would be a good time to dispose of the ranch properties because of the "oil scare" and the apparent prosperity of the country. Moreover, there was a "tremendous amount of rain" on the ranch, and the price of both cattle and land were steadily advancing.

For the next three years Hobart spent much time in trying to find a buyer for the JA Ranch. He offered a standing commission of two and one-half percent to any person or company who would sell the ranch property, the commission to be paid when the deal was closed to the satisfaction of the executors.⁷ From 1926 to 1929 hundreds of inquiries came in and scores of prospective buyers were shown over the ranch, but all efforts to make a sale proved futile. Hobart proposed to Senator James Wadsworth that he introduce a bill in Congress to make a national park out of the JA Ranch lands. Senator Wadsworth replied that such a bill would receive "rough treatment" and it was never introduced. On June 10, 1929, Hobart wrote that the executors were "planning a complete change in regard to handling the JA Ranch, unless something results from the deals now pending".⁸ Hobart's letters reveal that the executors

⁷ "I am doing my best to bring about a satisfactory sale of the property. There are many reasons for this. First, I want to see the wishes of Mrs. Adair carried out as nearly as possible and the legatees thoroughly satisfied. Again, it has become quite a burden to Mr. Coke and myself. There are many things as there naturally would be to annoy one. I am convinced that there is a good deal of stealing going on in the country generally, and while I have nothing to fear so far as the ranch is concerned, I am satisfied we do not escape altogether. With the wonderful development of the oil proposition in the Panhandle, thieves go out at night with the trucks and kill beef and haul it in to supply the markets and oil workers." T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Miss Joan Royce, Dublin, Ireland, October 13, 1926.

⁸ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to H. F. McGill, Alice, Texas, June 10, 1929.

were considering two plans: either they would sell off part of the cattle in order that they might sell off the farm lands in small tracts, and thus reduce the operating expenses, or else they would sell all of the stock and lease the land outright for grazing purposes.

When the report of these plans reached London, A. S. Ellison wrote from the office of the Public Trustee on June 15, 1929: "The Public Trustee is much concerned at the suggestion in your letter. . . . that you may possibly find it necessary to sell the whole of the cattle on the Ranch without any prospect of selling the Ranch itself. . . . The indefinite prospects with regard to the Ranch, in the event of the sale of the cattle as a separate asset, must naturally cause great anxiety to the Public Trustee. . . . and before any further steps are taken on a course which in the absence of further details appears to be attended with very serious consequences to the beneficiaries, he feels that if possible an interview should be arranged. . . . If, therefore you could arrange to come over to England at an early date, a full discussion would be of considerable assistance to all concerned."

This letter from the Public Trustee put an end to the plans of the executors to sell part of the stock and part of the lands on the ranch. They renewed vigorously their efforts to make a sale of the entire ranch properties, and at the same time they tried to devise some plan of reducing taxes and legacies. On August 20, 1929, Coke wrote Thomas A. Renshaw in London:

We have been making such constant efforts to sell the ranch, always hoping to reach some successful result in the near future, that I have delayed (writing you), hoping to give you some definite information, but though we have been on the verge of what we thought was a sale, they have all turned out as usual, and we have not as yet sold. We did contemplate seriously selling a large part of the cattle and very considerably reducing the herd, so that we would not need all of the land for grazing purposes, and then attempting to sell off a tract of 50,000 to 100,000 acres, if it was possible to do so. But upon receipt of a letter from the Public Trustee of the 15th June last, giving us his views on the subject. . . . and the receipt of your letter on June 19th, we thought it proper to make some further effort to sell the thing as a whole and

not as we then contemplated. We are doing our level best not only to make the administration of the property successful for all parties concerned, but at the same time paying due regard to your views in our attempts to do so. I am not sure that the result is going to prove that we have been entirely wise in doing this, for the ranch was in very fine shape in the early summer and cattle are very high. Cattle are still high, but a little off, and we are now in the midst of a very trying drouth, which if it continues a great deal longer may do us much damage. . . . However, if we are lucky enough to get through the drouth in good shape and have the price of cattle maintained, we will still get out in fairly good shape.

The winter of 1929-1930 produced a crisis and a turning point in the affairs of the JA Ranch. The great Wall Street crash of October, 1929, threw the financial world into a state of chaos and panic. Moreover, the Great Plains region was on the verge of one of the most severe drouths ever recorded in its history. In a letter dated September 12, 1930, Hobart hastened to inform the Public Trustee of the disastrous effects of the drouth and depression upon the ranching business. "We have had the most severe drouth in years," he wrote, "and that, together with the depression in the cattle market, makes a very hard year for us. We have had some rain of late, which I am hoping will improve the range, so that we may be prepared in a measure for winter. Cattle prices are somewhere from one-third to one-half below last year's prices. There is really no surplus of cattle to any extent in the United States. On the other hand the general depression is having its effect."

These conditions multiplied the difficulties of the executors in their attempts to make a sale of the ranch properties, and also in the administration of the affairs of the ranch and the estate. Payment of all legacies was stopped. This increased and crystallized the dissatisfaction of a number of the legatees. Prices took a severe drop and there was no sale for anything. The operating expenses of the ranch increased in spite of everything Hobart could do, but the organization had to be maintained and kept intact.

By 1929 the executors had almost despaired of making a sale

of the ranch properties. "The trouble with the people who are talking to us is that they are all 'realtors'. . . . They don't control anybody else and they have no money, and I don't believe we will ever make a sale to such people," wrote Hobart. Coke added on August 20, 1929, "We are almost hopeless of making a sale of the whole property and I fear we will have to return to the policy of selling a large part of the cattle, reducing our necessity for pasturage, and then if possible sell a part of the land."

However, in spite of the drouth and the depression, inquiries about the ranch continued to come in from all parts of the country, and scores of people came to look over the ranch, but no sale could be made. Coke wrote the Public Trustee that,

It is perfectly astonishing how many people have made inquiries, gone out and looked at this ranch in an apparently serious way, and never been heard of afterwards. . . . I believe it will be a long time before we can sell the whole property, but I am very much in hopes of being able to sell some parts of it and a considerable number of the cattle, so as to finish payment of the taxes and greatly reduce the legacies: reducing them to a point where their ultimate payment will be absolutely certain, and where a remunerative return can be paid on that part of the legacies not satisfied.

Since no sale of the ranch could be made, the executors made a determined effort to reduce the liabilities of the ranch by paying off all small legacies. But the Public Trustee contended that the British revenue authorities had first claim on all monies paid out of the estate, and that all payments of both legacies and taxes must go through the office of the Public Trustee. "You will recollect that it is impossible for any payment to be made to Mr. Renshaw at any rate, without the sanction of the Revenue Authorities, as the Public Trustee is the Trustee of his Fund and, therefore, any payment would have to come through the Public Trustee and he would render himself personally liable to the Revenue Authorities if he were to pass the payment on to Mr. Renshaw.

As regards the other beneficiaries in England, the position also is that if you should make any payments to any of them direct and by any chance the

Revenue Authorities were to become aware of this, they could proceed against those beneficiaries for the outstanding duties to the extent of the payments which had been made to the beneficiaries in question.⁹

Confronted with this difficulty, the executors decided to pay the taxes and death duties to the British Government in full, provided they could get sufficient concessions to make it worth their efforts to raise the money for the full amount. Consequently, in 1932 Henry Coke, Jr. was sent to England and an agreement was reached with the British revenue authorities by which all death duties and taxes were to be paid. The executors believed that by paying off all duties and taxes due the British Government, and also by reducing the number of beneficiaries, matters would be greatly simplified in making a final settlement of the estate. But the strong opposition of a number of the larger legatees, plus the fact that all liquid wealth in this country was frozen in 1932, made it impossible to carry this plan through.

Therefore, the executors continued their efforts to make a sale of the ranch as a whole, but in doing so they encountered all kinds of difficulties. The Texas Panhandle was in a period of transition from large ranches to smaller stock farms. The country was being settled, and land values and taxes were increasing. These things reduced the profits of large scale ranching. The situation was aptly described by G. L. Moody of San Angelo, Texas, in a letter to Hobart in 1929. With reference to the sale of the JA lands Moody observed that,

With county, road and school taxes steadily mounting even in the grazing sections of Texas, there is very little inducement left for the cattleman to buy large ranches at the present prices.

All farm land colonization companies have disbanded because there is no longer a chance for steady long time employment. Because of the present day conditions I would not undertake to organize a colonizing company, nor do I know of anyone who could afford to do so except the large land owner who wishes to sell and colonize his own property exclusively.¹⁰

⁹ Cablegram from office of the Public Trustee, London, England, to Henry C. Coke, Dallas, Texas, February 7, 1929.

¹⁰ G. L. Moody, San Angelo, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, December 23, 1929.

But since a large part of the JA lands were not adaptable to agriculture, this plan was not practical in the disposal of the property.

Perhaps one of the most annoying things Hobart had to deal with in his efforts to dispose of the JA properties was the interference of agents and brokers. He received hundreds of communications from such persons asking for prices on the ranch, terms of sale, commissions, exclusive options, and many other similar questions. Hobart gave the same reply to all such inquiries in writing, and dealt with such persons with extreme caution in order to keep the property from getting tied up in any way. Yet in spite of all of his precautions, he was not able to rid himself of these pestiferous agents. They nagged him continually. They offered the ranch property for sale in various parts of the country without his knowledge or consent. It was often difficult for Hobart to tell whether he was dealing with an actual prospective buyer who was really interested in the ranch, or whether he was negotiating with simply a brokerage agent.

On June 13, 1930, Thomas D. Campbell, President of the Campbell Farming Corporation of Hardin, Montana, wrote Hobart that he was interested in the JA properties as a proposition for farming lands, but, he wrote,

There is a matter I wish to write of in a most friendly way, namely, the fact that your famous ranch is being offered for sale by almost every broker in New York City. I encountered it almost everywhere I went and we got many offers from brokers in all parts of the country in regard to your ranch. It has been offered at such various prices in Los Angeles that the property has been depreciated. I think the same applies in New York. I am convinced that it would be better for you to handle this property yourself or give some responsible firm an exclusive agency on it as there is nothing so hazardous to good property as to have it offered indiscriminately.

These brokers and agents thus advertised the JA property for sale in order to raise the \$100,000.00 escrow money which Hobart required of every person before he would begin nego-

tiations for the sale of the ranch. The two and one-half percent commission, which the executors offered for the sale of the vast acreage of the ranch, was so enticing that brokers and agents resorted to every kind of chicanery in order to share in the proceeds of the sale. Moreover, it would give a firm considerable prestige to have a part in the sale of a ranch that was nationally known. Hobart, therefore, could never rid himself of these agents and they were a great hindrance to him in his efforts to sell the property.

After 1929 the drouth conditions grew steadily worse and the effects of the depression became more far reaching. These conditions not only lessened the chances of the sale of the property, but they also forced the executors to consider a reduction in the price of the land if a sale was to be made. In 1931 cattle were lower than they had been for years and finances were at a standstill. Such conditions added greatly to the anxiety of the executors and increased the tense relations between them and the British representatives. It was more difficult than ever for the executors to decide what policy to pursue with reference to the sale of the ranch. Hobart realized that the executors would have to wait for times to get better, but the great difficulty was to get the Public Trustee and the legatees to understand the hard problems with which he was confronted at the ranch.¹¹

The year 1932 was a critical one in the history of the JA Ranch. The death of Coke in that year was a great blow to

¹¹ "I am constantly studying about what is best in regard to the Adair Estate. Cattle prices are extremely low and there is very little sale for land at the present time. I try to realize the viewpoint of the legatees, as well as our side of the question. It is now going on ten years since Mrs. Adair's death and aside from paying interest up to certain points, we have only been able to pay off some of the smaller legacies. With a change for the better in economic conditions, which is bound to come after awhile, I am sure the cattle business will come into its own, as there is no surplus of beef cattle as in the case with other agricultural lines. We have the herds at the JA Ranch in fine shape to build up, if we can only have favorable seasons, and with the improvements in regard to water that we are now making, the cattle at the ranch in the near future should be in better condition than ever." T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Miss Joan Royse, London, England, June 4, 1931.

Hobart. For years he had relied upon Coke to look after the legal affairs connected with the ranch. Moreover, their years of association had developed into a warm mutual friendship. Since there was no provision in the will of Mrs. Adair for a successor to Coke, the entire responsibility for the management of the ranch and the disposition of its properties devolved upon Hobart in the greatest crisis the ranch had ever faced. The drouth was reaching its worst stages in 1932 and grew in intensity until 1935. Hobart faced insurmountable difficulties in the administration of the affairs of the ranch. As conditions grew worse the great physical strain taxed him almost to the breaking point. In describing these trying times Hobart wrote that,

Unless a change takes place before long, neither the JA nor any other ranch that I am familiar with can go on indefinitely. I have seen several periods of extreme depression in the cattle business in the past fifty-one years and conditions have always righted themselves, when nature was allowed to take a hand. What will happen now when we are attempting to rule over nature including the law of supply and demand is beyond me. . . . The drouth is the most excessive and the most intensive I have ever known. . . . Fred (Hobart) is scraping the bed of the Washita (River) every other day, something I have never had to do before in more than forty years. . . . Every bite of grass that cattle take will not be replaced unless it rains. . . . I agree that the situation is very serious and I have never been more puzzled to know just what to do. Fortunately we have plenty of water in most places. Thanks to the provisions we made in the past.

At the height of the depression in 1935, Hobart wrote Senator James W. Wadsworth in Washington, D. C., as follows:

I have been in Texas going on fifty-three years, and in the Panhandle going on forty-nine years and I have never witnessed anything that would compare with the present conditions here. It has simply been one series of terrible dust storms after another and last night we had one that capped the climax so far. The little grass that is left is completely saturated with dust and some of the cattle are dying as a result of it. . . . There has been a great amount of land plowed that in my judgment should never have been disturbed and now we are paying the penalty. I have been trying to find some one who could tell me where we are going so far as the government is concerned. . . . I re-

cently asked an old friend in San Antonio. He replied, "We are not going but have already gone to - - -".¹²

These last years found Hobart struggling courageously on in the face of tremendous odds in his efforts to keep the JA Ranch going. Depressed prices, dust storms, financial difficulties, dissatisfied beneficiaries, who did not seem to have any conception of the serious problems which confronted the executor, increased taxes on both sides of the Atlantic, and many other perplexing problems caused Hobart much anxiety in his efforts to fulfill faithfully a public trust, and at the same time protect the best interests of all the beneficiaries concerned. During these difficult times legatees in England made constant inquiries about weather conditions in Texas. They scanned carefully all accounts of dust storms, terrific heat, low cattle prices etc., but continued to press their claims for legacy payments. Such claims were exasperating to Hobart and he felt at times like giving up in despair. "I have often felt like shrinking from the responsibility," he wrote in 1933, "but I do not recall that I have ever run from it, hence, I reckon I am too old to begin now."

Hobart continued, therefore, to make detailed statements to the legatees of all monies paid out for taxes and ranch operations, and dealt in a most tolerant and sympathetic manner

12 T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Henry Coke, Jr., Dallas, Texas, May 15 and August 8, 1934; T. D. Hobart to Senator James W. Wadsworth, Washington, D. C., April 16, 1935.

Clinton Henry, who was for years Book Keeper and Assistant Manager at the JA Ranch during the Hobart administration, says that, In 1935 only twenty-five percent of the grass roots on the ranch were living as a result of the severe drouth conditions. Calves were lighter in 1934 than they had ever been as a result of this.

"The Government had not yet started subsidizing cattlemen and Mr. Hobart was entirely on his own. There was no grass in the winter of 1934. We fed over 10,000 cattle that winter but there were 19,000 cattle that had no feed. They wintered and fed on mesquite leaves, grass roots, and anything else they could get to. We shipped hay from South Texas by the car load, and hauled hundreds of tons of bundles from over the Panhandle wherever we could get them. This caused tremendous expense and even with this we had heavy losses. If it had not been for the mild winter we would have been put out of business." Clinton Henry, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, April 11, 1941.

with certain legatees who were greatly dissatisfied with the management of the affairs of the ranch. He cut salaries, including his own, on more than one occasion; and, with the aid of an efficient and loyal group of employees, he was able to keep the ranch functioning in an efficient manner.

Continued dissatisfaction among a number of the legatees, and increasing financial difficulties arising from the drouth and the depression, made Hobart extremely anxious to make some disposition of the ranch as soon as possible. He believed that 1933 would be a favorable time to dispose of the ranch, even at a greatly reduced price, since the English pound had dropped considerably below par. Payments to the legatees were to be paid in dollars rather than pounds, and Hobart thought that the difference between the exchange price of the American dollar and the English pound would more than offset the reduced sale price of the land. Henry C. Coke, Jr. submitted figures to show that if the ranch sold at a greatly reduced price in 1933, the legatees would even receive more money than they would have received had the ranch sold at a higher price in 1929. Moreover, he concluded that such monies as would be received by the legatees in 1933 could be invested while prices were low, and they would thereby have the advantage of a rising market on their investments.¹³

¹³ "It seems that the Executors may well bear in mind that since the pound is greatly depreciated at present, the values which the legatees will receive is therefore increased, since the legacies are payable in dollars. Also it must be borne in mind that the purchasing power of the pound in England is likewise more than it was in 1929, and also that the payments will be made at a time when investments may be made at very low figures, whereas if the money had been paid in 1929 and invested at those prices, the legatees would by this time have suffered tremendous losses. The foregoing is most favorable to the primary legatees, but must also be taken into consideration when you consider the value to the English people of the residuary estate. If \$672,500.00 had been distributed to the residuary legatees when the pound was at \$4.85, they would have received 138,659 pounds. The foregoing is what would be distributed, according to my calculations, if the ranch were sold for \$2,000,000.00. If the sale were for \$2,250,000.00 there would be distributed as stated above, \$913,500.00 which at par would equal 188,142 pounds; whereas at \$3.30 a pound it will equal 276,818 pounds. You will therefore see that at the present rate of exchange the residuary legatees will get almost as many pounds for \$672,500.00 as they would have gotten several years ago for \$913,500.00." Henry C. Coke, Jr., Dallas, Texas, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, February 3, 1933.

Hobart's continued efforts to sell the ranch revealed the fact that it was necessary, even in the midst of the depression, to make further improvements on the ranch. He wrote A. E. Ellison of the office of the Public Trustee in London in September, 1931, that

Numbers and numbers of prominent cattlemen have been taken over the ranch in years past with a view of making a sale, and invariably we have been met with the objections that there was a lack of water, and the only way to meet this just criticism is to prepare for more water. While a great amount of money has been spent in years gone by in developing water, the lack of a sufficient amount is mainly the weak point of the Ranch, for with an ample supply of water, the annual calf crop could undoubtedly be much improved, as well as the general condition of the herd.

Thus more wells had to be drilled and more windmills had to be erected; new tanks had to be built and old ones had to be cleaned out at various places on the ranch where sufficient water was not available. Hobart reported later that between thirty and forty earth reservoirs had been constructed which greatly increased the storage capacity on the ranch, fences and camps were rebuilt and put in repair, and, with the aid of Donley and Armstrong counties, the sand beds of Mulberry and Hall creeks were bridged. These water improvements were a big factor in making it possible to carry the 21,000 head of cattle on the ranch through the drouth period in fairly good condition. It also helped to keep the cattle and the horse herds constantly on the upgrade. Throughout the remaining period of the drouth JA calves found a ready market at top prices.

In his years of effort to dispose of the JA Ranch properties Hobart was offered a great variety of trades involving money and other property, but he was interested only in making an outright sale in order that he might pay off all legacies and make a final settlement of the estate. A summary account of some of these proposed trades will give some idea of their magnitude, extent, and variety.

In 1929 the Howard & Orr Company, Inc. of Chicago

offered an office building in the Loop District of Chicago in exchange for the JA properties. The Chicago property was valued at \$400.00 per square foot and covered more than a quarter block. "We believe that the rental per square foot is greater than any other building in Chicago and probably higher than any other office building in the world," wrote D. M. Fawcett, who was handling the Chicago end of the deal.¹⁴ Had this deal been consummated, it would have been a notable contrast in property values from the vast unoccupied acres of the JA lands to a small concentrated area in one of the most populous cities in the country.

In May, 1933, Hobart received a letter from Frederick E. Scott of Los Angeles, California, who claimed to be in touch with the Archbishop of the Greek Church of North America with a membership of from eight to ten million people. In order to relieve his church of a great financial burden, the Archbishop proposed to establish a colony of members of his church and make it self sustaining. He thought the JA Ranch was just the body of land he wanted and he could handle the entire 400,000 acres at ten dollars per acre, "provided he could get the proper terms of payment."

It is the plan, wrote Scott, to locate the families on the land with certain acreage holdings, build them a house to meet their family requirements, furnish them with tools and other supplies, until their land commences to produce and gradually withdraw outside help from the Church when the income from the land brings them an income. It is not the purpose to make rich men of them, but to enable them to make their own living 'by the sweat of their brow' and build up the country and abide by the laws of the land and be a credit to this country and a blessing to themselves and family. The placing of these people on the land will take a large sum of money and therefore it is desirable that the terms be as liberal as consistent.

The proposition is thus: no payment on the principal for a period of five years after which payments will extend over a period of fifteen years. During the five years they agree to pay all the taxes and interest falling due and will commence to place people on the land immediately. It is of course understood that the Bishop will qualify as to his ability to meet all obligations as to taxes

¹⁴ D. M. Fawcett, Chicago, Illinois, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, September 11, 1929.

and interest in the proposition and if this proves to be satisfactory to you, then the question is whether you would make such a deal knowing that all obligations as to taxes and interest, will be met during the period of five years as mentioned above. Also realizing that during this time the land will be under splendid development by the different purchasers and thus an asset to the property.

This deal could never have been made satisfactory to the legatees and therefore Hobart was not interested. Moreover, it required too long a time for final consummation. If this deal could have been arranged, it would have introduced into the Texas Panhandle an entirely new social and religious element, and would have been another novel experiment in the colonization of West Texas.

Standing in direct contrast with this proposal to colonize the JA lands with a people who represent one of the oldest cultures of the Old World, was a plan to return these lands to one of the aboriginal tribes of the New World. In 1934 a band of Osage Indians from Oklahoma visited the JA Ranch with a view of purchasing it. The visit of the Indians was a surprise to Hobart and at first he did not take the matter seriously. In a letter to Henry C. Coke, Jr. he had the following to say with reference to the visit of the Indians:

We certainly had a delegation of Osage Indians at the Ranch brought there by Mr. Stribling and some others in charge. I thought it was more of a joke than anything else at first but those Indians are certainly very intelligent. I understand the government has their money mainly in trust and that authorities have agreed that they might buy the ranch property if they find something to suit them. . . . They went on quite a round over the ranch and I believe they were quite well pleased. They are planning to come back early next month with some more of the tribe. . . . We held a 'council of war' in the den at the ranch the other night. I was on the witness stand. One of the leading Indians, Wrathmaker, did the questioning, while Strike Ax and others looked on and believe me, he was very intelligent in his questioning. His squaw took down notes in shorthand. If by any possibility a trade is made. . . . it (the ranch) will be deeded to the government, in trust for the Osage Indians. These Indians manifested much interest in the ranch and it was reported that the Department of Interior was favorable to the deal. . . . Some of my friends are guying me a little about the Indians and I am telling them if we had not plowed up any of the Ranch or fenced it, I might be able to

give it back to them but I am not at all sure they would have it in its present condition.¹⁵

After the "council of war" with the Indians was concluded, Hobart entertained and amused them with stories of the early days in the Texas Panhandle. Among other anecdotes he related the following incident: "You all knew Uncle Charlie Goodnight?", Hobart asked, to which the Indians answered in the affirmative. "Well some years ago," Hobart continued, "Goodnight staged a buffalo hunt at his ranch and had present some of the old time Comanche and Kiowa Indians whom he knew in the old days. Mr. Goodnight told me that these Indians were sitting on his porch and had noticed his horse brand. One of them remarked, 'I believe we bought a bunch of horses from you once'. 'Like hell you did,' Mr. Goodnight replied, 'You bought them while I was asleep.'" This provoked a roar of laughter among the Osage Indians.

The Osages made a second visit to the JA Ranch and again inspected the property, but for some reason got cold feet and the deal was dropped.

In 1934 a movement was begun to sell the JA Ranch to the federal government to be used as a national park. This movement was sponsored by the late James O. Guleke, an attorney and civic leader of the Panhandle and of Texas. Guleke was ably assisted by the Honorable Marvin Jones, who at that time was a member of Congress, and by many other leading citizens of the Panhandle. Regional Director for the Land Policy Section of the United States Government, Mr. Gray, visited the ranch and made an inspection. He was favorably impressed with these lands for park purposes. This matter was pending at the time of Hobart's death in 1935.

During Hobart's efforts to sell the JA Ranch inquiries came

¹⁵ "Tall Chief told me this morning that their leader asked the spirit for guidance in selecting the Osage nation, they having the choice of the East and the West. And their leader had a vision that pictured the East with poverty and increasing numbers and the West with wealth and decreasing numbers. They chose the West." C. C. Shaller, Fairfax, Oklahoma, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, September 21, 1934.

from England, Germany, Holland, and other parts of Europe. One agent claimed to have a prospective buyer for the ranch "who owns a million dollars, all in Russian gold." Another inquiry was from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company of London. Scores of prominent citizens from many parts of the United States visited the ranch with a view of purchasing it. Among these was the late Will Rogers who visited the ranch in 1935. Yet despite all of these visits, and apparently good prospective buyers, the ranch remained in the hands of the executor in 1935. Hobart still believed, however, that the ranch would in time be sold and the affairs of the estate finally settled. On March 21, 1935, he wrote Henry C. Coke, Jr. of Dallas: "Don't you think I have been up against some strong propositions? First, your father and I tied up with a jail bird and now one of my latest prospects is in the asylum. I do think if we live to see this thing through and settled up with everybody in a satisfactory way you and I would be justified in putting on the celebration your father suggested and after that, I believe I will try and complete the history of the JA Ranch."

A few weeks after this letter was written Hobart crossed the Great Divide, and the JA Ranch passed into the hands of the British legatees.

THE TEXAS CATTLE INDUSTRY

THE TEXAS CATTLE INDUSTRY had its origins around the Spanish missions in Southwest Texas. These missions, which were established in the latter part of the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries, were set up for the purpose of converting and civilizing the Texas Indians. Cattle were an essential part of the missions since they furnished the principal commissary for both the missionaries and the Indians. Thousands of Spanish cattle, horses, and other livestock, therefore, were brought into Texas when the missions were established. They readily adapted themselves to the ideal ranges, especially in the El Paso, Lower Rio Grande, and San Antonio areas where missions were located. In fact missions and livestock proved to be Spain's chief contribution to Texas and the Southwest.¹

Spanish missions served as a frontier institution on the northern rim of the Spanish empire during the last stages of its existence, but they were finally secularized and abandoned. Spanish longhorns and Spanish horses continued to run wild and dominate the region for another century.

For more than a century after the secularization of the Spanish missions in West Texas the struggle for occupation and control of the region continued. In 1821 Spain's colonial empire in the New World crumbled and quickly disintegrated into local units of administration all of which were honeycombed with factional strife, disorder, and confusion. West Texas became a no-man's land and for another century it remained a refuge for the lawless elements of Indians, Spanish, and a sprinkling of Anglo-American renegades. While East

¹ "The pueblo of San Antonio was typical of all. Agricultural and stock-raising activities had increased since 1745. At the four missions in question (at San Antonio) there were now grazing 4,897 head of cattle, 12,000 sheep and goats, and about 1600 horses, and each mission had from thirty-seven to fifty yokes of working oxen." Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, *Wider Horizons in American History*, p. 143.

Texas was being colonized during the first half of the nineteenth century, West Texas, with its ill-defined boundaries, continued to be a disputed territory among the lawless remnants of the three races that were struggling to gain control of it. It was not until 1840, and following, that the problems of occupation and control of this region were forcibly presented to the Texans as well as to the government of the United States.

The events in West Texas from 1700 to 1848 were significant for the future. It was during this period that cattle, horses, and other live stock grew wild and multiplied in great numbers in the region. Southwest Texas became overstocked and by the end of the Civil War scores of thousands of Spanish stock were unbranded and unclaimed on the southwestern ranges. For livestock it was not a problem of occupation of the region; it was a problem of room and subsistence. Moreover, it became necessary to establish some kind of control over the region in order to give constructive direction to its natural economy.

This borderland of West Texas furnished excellent opportunities and a splendid training ground for the few Anglo-Americans who dared to venture into the wild animal kingdom. From 1836 to 1866 a few Texans wandered into this overcrowded cattleground and learned to ride, to shoot, and to follow cattle. These were the progenitors of the Texas cowboys who later spread their fame over the entire West. These earliest Texas cowboys borrowed much from their predecessors, the Spaniards, but they always modified what they borrowed and adapted it to suit their own needs and conditions. They absorbed much of the Spanish cattle lore and Anglicised it; they used the technique of the Spanish vaquero but they improved and perfected it; they observed first hand the Spanish rancheria and later made it the most effective of the Anglo-Americans' institutions in the permanent occupation of the high plains region of the Southwest.

During the first half of the nineteenth century certain

Spanish and Anglo-American forces were converging toward the Southwest, and the essential elements in the making of the Texas cattle industry formed into a visible pattern. The Spanish horse, a natural cow horse; the Spanish longhorn, an animal perfectly adapted to a semi-arid plains environment; and the Texas cowboy, an expert horseman and herdsman, equipped with his six-shooter and other necessary paraphernalia, took permanent hold in the grass roots of the Southwest. Moreover, soon after the middle of the century railroads were pointing toward the very heart of the region, and on toward the Pacific coast. The completion of these railroads connected the rapidly rising industrial East with the virgin lands of the West. Buffalo hides furnished the first economic incentive for the penetration of railroads into the nearer Southwest, but cattle proved to be of more permanent value. With the establishment of the Chisholm and the Goodnight-Loving trails in 1866, millions of hides and hundreds of tons of beef became available and the Texas cattle industry was assured.²

The development of the cattle industry in its initial stages was both unique and significant. It was unique in that it was a mobile and transitory institution without any conscious effort on the part of the cattlemen to make it permanent. It was significant because it was the first Anglo-American institution to become established permanently on West Texas soil, and because it brought about the first semblance of organization and control in a region the white man had never been able to occupy before. Since neither the laws of Texas nor the laws of the

² Mr. Avery Turner who came to the Texas Panhandle with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway and who spent the remainder of his life in the West had the following to say about the extension of the Santa Fe Railway into the Southwest: "We built into the Panhandle in 1887, a cheap railroad with steep grades, mainly to move cattle. For three months in the Spring and again in the Fall, we would move little seventeen-car trains of cattle, and during the other six months of the year, practically nothing. . . . We built railroads across Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas, and spent about \$30,000,000 in Texas to develop the Panhandle, including costs of Gulf connections. From 1887 to 1923 the rail lines in Texas never earned a profit of themselves and would have become bankrupt except that they were feeders to the main lines." MS. Avery Turner, Amarillo, Texas: a paper read at the annual meeting Panhandle Old Settlers' Association, September 30, 1925. Museum Files, Canyon, Texas.

national government had ever been extended to West Texas, it became necessary for the cattlemen themselves to set up their own means of organization and control. The cattle ranch with its attendant trail outfit, its roundup, and other detailed organization was the answer to this problem. There were no legal limits to a ranchman's possibilities on the open ranges. There were only physical limitations, such as boundary lines, and boundaries were usually determined by agreement among the cattlemen themselves. Thus, beginning with the establishment of the million-acre King Ranch in 1853,³ located on the Gulf Coast between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers, the first Anglo-American cattle ranch was established on the ranges of West Texas. This institution, founded on the open free range, followed gradually up the river courses and along the cattle trails toward the north and west, and by the middle of the Eighties it had spread over the entire reaches of Texas' public domain.

Since cattle ranches were first established in the wide open spaces, they were perhaps the most highly perfected organizations in West Texas during the nineteenth century. However, the cattle industry rested on uncertain and insecure foundations during this period. Cattlemen owned neither the grass nor the land upon which their ranches were located. They simply appropriated the public domain and made use of the grass which it afforded. Although the reputation for profits on the free ranges far outran the facts, yet the widely-acclaimed reports of huge profits and immense fortunes being made in the cattle business, especially after the removal of the Indians and the buffalo, made it worth man's effort to occupy the region permanently.

Since the problem of occupation of West Texas lands was solved, the next logical steps in the development of the Texas

³ Robert J. Kleburg, Jr., Kingsville, Texas, to Congressman John N. Garner, Washington, D. C., October 1, 1932. Hobart Letter Files.

cattle industry were for permanency and economic stability. Many factors entered into this process of development. One of the most important of these was the free competition for grass on the open ranges which resulted in overcrowded range conditions. As a result of this, together with the introduction of well drills, windmills, and barbed wire during the last two decades of the century, the fenceless prairies in West Texas were quickly transformed into closed ranges. These changes required capital on a large scale that was freely supplied by Eastern and foreign capitalists who invested millions of dollars in both lands and cattle in the West Texas plains. While these changes were accompanied by many social and economic ills, yet these large scale investments gave value to West Texas lands and made the cattle ranch a permanent institution.

Economic stability was yet another matter. No sooner had the cattle ranches become permanently established than they were faced with the problem of adjustment to a rapidly changing social and economic order. Settlements followed closely in behind ranches in the occupation of West Texas lands. Ranchmen who had leased, bought, and fenced large tracts of land in West Texas were soon confronted with an economic dilemma in the production of meat at an increased cost on lands that were gradually rising in value. The results of such conditions lay in the logic of events. When the agricultural and stock raising value of West Texas lands exceeded their value as stock raising lands alone, the economic determinant took its natural course and large ranches were cut up into smaller ranches and stock farms. As a result greater permanence was achieved in the occupation of West Texas lands but the search for economic stability in the cattle business continued.

As the cattle industry grew and developed its machinery became more extensive and complicated. By the end of the century the industry had grown from a sapling to a sturdy oak with its trunk and branches reaching into every part of the

nation, and its roots firmly fixed in the soil of West Texas. Texas cattle were being sent to northern pastures for grazing purposes; to mid-western feeding pens for finishing, and to the packing plants of large industrial centers. With the improved methods of refrigeration, Texas beef was being shipped to all parts of the nation, and even to foreign countries. Texas meat producers found themselves in competition with the producers of other meat products in the United States as well as in foreign countries. Moreover, Texas cattlemen, producers of raw meat and hides, with their capital stock rapidly shrinking, saw their industry slipping into the clutches of large northern trusts which controlled prices both on the open markets and the finished products.

As a result of these conditions three noticeable trends have been evident in the development of the cattle industry during the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. In the first place, the Texas industry enlarged and perfected its organization and affiliated with other cattle raisers' associations in other states and with the National Association. In the second place The National Live Stock Association, with its affiliated local and state associations, established closer relations with the nation's hog, sheep, and goat raisers, and also with the stock farmers. And finally these organizations sought greater economic stability by attempting to gain control of the markets for their products through state and national legislation.

As early as 1876 Texas cattlemen began to realize the need for some kind of organization. It was difficult, if not impossible, to hold cattle on the home ranges, especially during the winter blizzards when herds drifted onto other ranges and became badly mixed. This alone made some kind of cooperative effort necessary. Moreover, cattle rustling had become prevalent and wide spread on the Texas ranges and cattlemen were forced to organize for protection. Consequently The Stock Raisers' Asso-

ciation of Northwest Texas was formed under the famous oak tree at Graham, Young County, on February 15th and 16th, 1877, "for the good and common interests of the stock raisers . . . and to do all in their power for the promotion of the stock interests." When it was first set up the organization consisted of a general office force, a legal department, and an inspection force. The inspection force was divided into market inspectors, field inspectors, and local inspectors. There were no salaried employees. The territory in which the members ranched was divided into six districts and ranchmen were appointed to look after the interests of each district. The first paid inspector was employed in 1883.

At its Ninth Annual Convention, held at Sherman in 1885, local cattle associations from the Coleman, Conchos, Brazos, and Colorado country merged with the larger association and the scope of its work was enlarged. In 1893 the name was changed to The Cattle Raisers' Association of Texas, and again in 1921 the name was changed to The Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association.⁴

As the range cattle industry moved westward other local associations were formed mainly for the purpose of breaking up cattle rustling. One of the most important of these local associations was The Panhandle Stockmens' Association which was formed in the spring of 1880 at Mobeetie. O. H. Nelson, one of the charter members, wrote:

This organization represents more cattle than any other similar organization in this (Texas) or any other state. The Panhandle Association through its executive committee, its inspectors and paid detectives on ranches, and its threatened vigilance committee, reduced cattle rustling in the Texas Panhandle to a minimum. As ranches became more permanently established, the Panhandle Stockmens' Association became one of the great stabilizing factors in Northwest Texas. It set up the first schools, brought the first criminals to trial, rid the Panhandle of its first cow thieves, fought the Texas fever with the so-called Winchester Quarantine, paid county officials, and stood for law and order generally. It was not uncommon to cut as high as twenty-five per-

⁴ Harry Benge Crozier, "Fifty Years of Progress and Service", *The Cattleman*, March, 1926, pp. 7-11; *The Cattleman*, March, 1929, p. 11; Bulletin No. 1, *The Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association*, Fort Worth, Texas, March 28, 1929.

cent from herds shipped at Hunnewell, Dodge City, Caldwell, and other shipping points, as being stolen cattle.

Many stolen cattle were also cut from herds at Doan's Crossing on Red River, at Tascosa on the Canadian, and at other important crossings. The Panhandle Stockmens' Association operated effectively until it was merged with the Texas Cattle Raisers' Association.⁵

In 1899 The Panhandle Stockmens' Association was reorganized for the purpose of protecting the cattlemen and to fight the Texas quarantine. The activities of this organization embraced the territory extending from the Canadian to the Pease rivers in the Texas Panhandle, and included the Cheyenne country in the Indian Territory, and reached as far west as Endee, New Mexico. This organization functioned until 1921 when it was merged with The Cattle Raisers' Association of Texas and the name was changed to The Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association. By 1930 the latter organization had a membership of 3300 and its jurisdiction included Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Kansas. At last the cattlemen of the Southwest had united in their efforts to protect and promote the interests of the cattle industry.⁶

Wherever cattlemen occupied the ranges on the western public domain during the latter part of the nineteenth century local and state associations were formed. By the end of the century it became necessary for the local and state associations to unite and broaden the scope and objectives of their work. In 1897 the National Livestock Association was formed. The purpose of this organization was to promote the interests and welfare of livestock production in general. At its Seventh Annual Convention which met at Portland, Oregon, in January, 1904, the national association reported a satisfactory meeting with both cattle and sheep men well represented. "From the unanimity of opinions expressed at this meeting," said the report,

⁵ O. H. Nelson, "The Panhandle Stockmens' Association", MS. Files, Museum, Canyon, Texas.

⁶ E. H. Brainard, Canadian, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, December 29, 1929; announcement, Fifth Annual Meeting, E. H. Brainard, Secretary, 1904. Hobart Letter Files.

"it has been demonstrated that the wide difference which at one time existed between those engaged in the cattle and those engaged in the sheep industry, is gradually disappearing, the interest of one to a very great extent being the interest of the other."⁷

The National Livestock Association was composed of individual livestock producers and affiliated local and state livestock associations. The chief functions of the national organization were to secure protective measures through national legislation such as, lower and less discriminatory freight rates, reduction of commission charges, tariff measures which would benefit the industry, control of markets, financial aid and protective measures in general.⁸

These new developments took place during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. When Hobart came to Texas in 1882, the Texas cattle industry had reached the bonanza stage of its development. It was during this period that eastern and foreign capital flowed freely into the Southwest in almost staggering sums to be invested in both land and cattle. Many large English and Scotch corporations were formed in the region such as, The Matador Land and Cattle Company, The Hansford Land and Cattle Company, The Texas Land and Cattle Company, The Prairie Cattle Company, The Rocking Chairs and many others. It was estimated that in the decade from 1875 to 1885 some \$30,000,000 of foreign capital, mostly English and Scotch, was invested in cattle ranching in the Western plains.⁹

When I came here, said Hobart, that big cattle boom was on and they were organizing cattle companies all over the western part of the state and in the Texas Panhandle. They actually came into the Panhandle and bought cattle that had been dead for two or three years; that is, they took a man's books, range delivery, they were so eager to get them. It was a time when it

⁷ Bulletin No. 48, "The Portland Meeting", Denver, Colorado, February 5, 1904. Hobart Letter Files.

⁸ Report of Executive Committee, June 26, 1922. Hobart Letter Files.

⁹ E. E. Dale, "Romance Rode With Development", *The Cattleman*, March, 1926, pp. 15 to 21.

was said they put up all kinds of jobs on foreigners, like running cattle around the hill, and counting them two or three times. I never witnessed any of it but I heard plenty of it. The President of our Company, Major Evans, took me out to dinner at Palestine in 1883 and they did not talk about anything but cattle.¹⁰

During this same period, as a result of improved methods of packing and refrigeration, exports of both meat and live cattle to England trebled and this gave much impetus to the increased demand for the production of beef on the western ranges.¹¹ This was followed by the severe winter and drouth of 1885-1886 which resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of cattle on the high plains and scores of cattlemen went broke. This gave a severe setback to the cattle industry, and one from which it never entirely recovered, but at the same time it had a stabilizing effect upon the cattle industry. From this time forward cattlemen moved more cautiously and the industry never witnessed another boom like that of the Eighties.¹²

When Hobart came to the Panhandle in 1886 to take charge of the lands of the New York and Texas Land Company his first clientele were the large cattle concerns. He ran the first boundary lines of hundreds of thousands of acres of West Texas lands with the object of fencing, leasing, and selling them to large cattle corporations for grazing purposes. He later transferred many of the same lands to small ranches and stock

10 T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 6, 1934.

11 In 1877 exports of beef, to England largely, were 49,000,000 pounds of beef and 50,000 head of live cattle; in 1882 America exported 120,000,000 pounds of beef and 190,000 head of cattle. E. E. Dale, "Romance Rode With Development", *The Cattleman*, March, 1926, pp. 15-21; see also L. F. Sheffy, "British Pounds and British Purebreds", *The American Hereford Journal*, October 15, 1936, p. 32 and following. Said Frank Hastings, "The years 1870 to 1880 marked the period of great change from the uncertain to the certain, from 'salt junk' to fresh meat distribution, and gave the real swing not only to the western packing industry but to a conception of better cattle on the ranges." Frank Hastings, *Recollections of a Ranchman*, p. 21. See also Joseph G. McCoy, *Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest*, chapter 15.

12 "Many cattlemen went broke about 1895 as a result of the great drouth of 1885 and 1886. They never did get over the effects of that drouth and the big die-up that followed it, and they just borrowed and robbed Peter to pay Paul until they finally went under." J. E. Meador, Matador, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, July 13, 1945.

From 1866 to 1895 Colonel Charles Goodnight and George W. Saunders estimated that 10,000,000 cattle worth \$200,000,000 were driven out of Texas. J. Frank Dobie, "The Texas Longhorn's Dying Bellow", *The Cattleman*, March, 1926, p. 143.

farms.¹³ For two decades after his arrival at Mobeetie, Hobart was ever engaged in the work of dividing and classifying lands into agricultural and grazing lands. He studied and analyzed West Texas soils in order to determine whether they were best fitted for agriculture or stock raising. His years of experience not only made him an expert land man, but they also gave him a wide acquaintance with cattlemen and their problems. He likewise became closely associated with hundreds of local stock farmers, especially in Northwest Texas. Moreover, Hobart's studied interest in forestry, irrigation and reclamation of lands, and agriculture and immigration gave him a variety of contacts and experiences which were of inestimable value to him in later years. He attended regularly meetings held by all of these groups, both state and national, and maintained active membership in many of the organizations that promoted work in these various fields.

In this work Hobart became closely associated with many of the leading cowmen of the Southwest. He witnessed the failure of many large cattle companies which, in the heyday of the cattle boom, had leased or purchased the lands of his Company. He saw the gradual disappearance of large ranches and the consequent transfer of their lands to small ranchers and stock farmers. Indeed Hobart's varied experiences with land and cattle during the last years of the nineteenth century had been a valuable schooling for him. He became well seasoned in his judgments, both as to land and cattle and their economic value to property owners. He understood clearly the importance of the physiographical relations between the West Texas plains and the western public domain of the United States which inevitably drew the stockmen of the West closer together in their common interests. In short by the end of the century the cattle industry had reached national proportions and stockmen could no longer solve their problems in terms of local and state associa-

¹³ See chapter 10.

tions alone. Hobart had observed and studied first hand the development of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association from its earliest organization under the famous oak tree at Graham in 1877 until it had expanded its jurisdiction over the entire region of the nearer Southwest, and until its interests and objectives had become national in scope. Moreover, Hobart was becoming well known in both land and cattle circles over the entire West.

By the opening of the twentieth century the cattle industry of the Southwest had become much more susceptible to conditions in the industrial East and to markets abroad. It was claimed in 1903 that the representatives of the four great packing companies of Chicago met every afternoon and fixed the prices of cattle on the following day's markets regardless of the supply and demand. At the same time the great strike in the packing plants resulted in enormous losses to the producers and shippers of livestock, while the consuming public continued to pay higher prices for beef. For the first third of the century markets generally were dull and cattle prices were low. *The West Texas Stockman*, published at Colorado City, Texas, in the issue of October 20, 1903, estimated that cattle prices had depreciated \$3.00 per head during the past year which netted a loss of \$105,000,000 to Texas cattlemen.¹⁴ These conditions prevailed notwithstanding the fact that export trade had shrunk and western ranges were being curtailed as a result of rising land prices. *The Kansas City Journal* concluded that "there is no reasonable relation between 2 3/4 cent steers and 15 cent meat."

For several years prior to 1914 cattle herds in the United States had been gradually diminishing and exports of beef and

¹⁴ Report of the National Live Stock Commission Company, Kansas City, to T. D. Hobart, September 2, 1904.

With cattle receipts at 18,125 on the Kansas City markets October 19, 1904, 100 feeding calves from Oldham County, Texas, sold for \$19.75 per head; 22 cows from Maxwell, New Mexico, 972 pounds, sold for \$2.65, and 44 steers, raised in Potter County, Texas, and grazed in Kansas during the summer, 1083 pounds, sold at \$3.35. These were about average prices during the first years of the century. See Reports of Clay Robinson and Company, Kansas City. Hobart Letter Files.

live cattle had almost disappeared. In addition to this 254,000,-000 pounds of beef and 868,000 head of cattle had been imported. World War I raised the exports of beef of the United States from 8,151,261 pounds in 1915 to 485,000,000 pounds in 1919. But after the war closed the European countries again sought the cheaper meats of Argentine and Australia, with the result that by 1921 the United States exports of beef again dropped to 55,000,000 pounds.¹⁵ Thus with the greatly increased cost of production after World War I, coupled with the depletion of cattle herds, the problem of economic stability in the cattle industry was greatly magnified.

Low prices of stock, dragging markets, monopolistic control, and agricultural expansion into the West with the consequent rise in the price of meat to the consumers, forced stock raisers, farmers, and feeders to pool their efforts and resources for the promotion and protection of their common interests. Local and state co-operative livestock marketing agencies were formed which culminated in the formation of The National Live Stock Marketing Association. The degree of success which has attended the operation of these associations is evidenced by the fact that from 1917 to 1927 approximately 50,000,000 animals were sold through these agencies amounting to more than \$1,200,000,000.¹⁶

After World War I herds continued to diminish and in 1929

¹⁵ "Federal Reserve Bank Survey", *The Cattleman*, August, 1926, pp. 28-30; Also Report A. E. de Ricqles, President American Commission Company, Denver, Colorado, June 17, 1915.

¹⁶ E. B. Spiller, "How Cooperatives Grow", *The Cattleman*, July 27, 1927, pp. 21-22. The Amarillo Buyers and Sellers Livestock Association was formed in December, 1915. The members of the Executive Committee of this organization were always to be from Potter and Randall counties, but anyone, "directly or indirectly connected with the Livestock business, wherever located" was to have an equal voice and vote in all other matters pertaining to the Association's affairs. The permanent home of the organization was to be in Amarillo. This body has held its annual meetings regularly in March ever since the Association was organized. The charter members of the organization were: B. T. Ware, John Landergerin, Lee Bivins, C. T. Herring, R. P. Bonner, O. H. Nelson, O. H. Boyce, J. O. Curtis, J. S. McKnight, Fred Horsbrugh, H. C. Harding, J. H. Charles, J. M. Shelton, P. H. Landergerin, W. R. Ozier, R. B. Masterson, Sr., W. H. Fuqua, and J. H. Avery. Minutes of Meeting, December 12, 1915. Hobart Letter Files; J. S. McKnight, Amarillo, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 6, 1945.

there were fewer cattle in the United States than in 1900. Texas in 1900 had 8,569,173 head of cattle as against 4,314,765 in 1929. In West Texas, west of the one hundredth meridian, there was a corresponding decrease, the figures being 2,193,070 in 1910 and 1,739,476 in 1925. Moreover, during the same period sheep and goats in Texas just about doubled. The greatest increase was in West Texas. Furthermore, as a result of the inability of the American cattle industry to compete with the cheaper beef in Australia and South America, beef exports in the United States had practically ceased. These economic trends caused many cattlemen to be apprehensive as to the future of the cattle industry.¹⁷

In the face of these economic changes cattlemen had increasing difficulty in financing their operations, while at the same time increased taxes on land, discriminatory freight rates, and foreign competition added greatly to their troubles. Therefore cattle raisers were forced to seek aid and relief through the state and national governments in maintaining the cattle industry.

Figures were submitted to show that, as a result of the Robertson Insurance Law, only seventeen percent of the assets of the fifty-four large insurance companies doing business in America were available to Texans in 1930; that a majority of the smaller insurance companies, savings banks, and real estate loan companies were out of funds; that the Federal Land Banks had greatly curtailed their operations and, as a result, money for the needs of the farmers and ranchmen was entirely inadequate.

¹⁷ Cattle in Texas

1900	8,569,173
1910	7,131,000
1920	5,960,000
1928	4,671,000

Sheep in Texas

1910	1,909,000
1920	2,650,000
1928	4,593,000

Goats in Texas

1910	1,135,000
1920	1,753,000
1928	2,750,000

In West Texas, West of the one hundredth meridian

2,193,070
2,068,768
1,739,476 (1925)

898,957
1,540,223
2,064,595 (1925)

603,843
787,586
805,810 (1925)

T. J. Cauley, "The Future of Ranching in Texas", *The Cattleman*, March, 1930, pp. 96-98.

quate to meet the crisis with which they were confronted; that Texas farmers and real estate owners were paying from one to two percent higher rate of interest on money borrowed than were the property owners of other mid-Western states where large insurance companies were allowed to do business.

This excess is estimated to cost the farmers, ranchmen and real estate owners of Texas ten million dollars per year. . . . Twenty-one Life Insurance Companies not doing business in Texas have real estate loans in Iowa of approximately \$500,000,000 and the same amount in Illinois. . . . while Texas has by far the greatest agricultural resources in the United States and offers better opportunities for investments than either of the above states.

In 1929 The New York Life Insurance Company paid to the State of California \$400,000 taxes on the year's business. Therefore, concluded the report, farm relief can be made a reality by the modification of the Robertson Insurance Law. The Texas Legislature now has its opportunity to build Texas.¹⁸

In addition to the inadequacy of funds for the operation of their business, cattlemen were burdened with ever increasing taxes. President Brock of the Wyoming Stock Growers' Association in an address before that body at its annual meeting in 1931 declared that real estate in the United States constituted forty-five percent of the wealth of the nation and paid eighty percent of the taxes. Robert J. Kleberg, Jr., of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association, in discussing the matter of taxes said:

I firmly believe that the high fixed local taxes are in a large measure at the root of our economic troubles. Our present ad valorem tax system of taxation was inaugurated to support a much simpler fabric of government during the period before the days of the automobile and other mechanical devices. It was never designed or intended to be used to liquidate bonds issued for the purpose of constructing public highways and other public improvements. A profound human fact is that since the beginning of the present century we have doubled the capacity of the human hand to produce, and in the face of this fact no one can question the wisdom of constructing or placing in our country improvements such as highways and schools to take advantage of the new order of things.

But Kleberg believed that as a means of paying for these

¹⁸ MS. "Build Texas: Place Texas on Equal Basis With Other States". n. d. Hobart Letter Files.

improvements a "flexible gross receipts tax" was necessary in order to bring relief to the land owners.¹⁹

Hobart was elected President of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association at its fifty-third annual Convention which met at Houston in 1929. He took charge of the affairs of the Association when it was on the verge of one of the greatest crises in the history of the organization. As President of the Association Hobart inherited such problems as the tariff, increased taxes, cattle rustling, railroad rate discrimination, the foot and mouth disease, competition with foreign beef producers, the spread between low-priced cattle and high-priced beef, and a number of other problems of lesser importance. However, his years of first hand experience and study of land and cattle had made him thoroughly conversant with all of these problems. He had served for a number of years as a member of the Executive Committee of The National Livestock Association and also on the Board of Directors of the State Association. Hobart attended the Annual Convention at El Paso in 1921, when the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association was formed, as a member of both the Executive Committee of the National Association and of the Board of Directors of the State Association. On his return from this convention he declared that he "met the bluest bunch of men I ever met at a convention. It was certainly depressing. . . . But we must always remember that is is always darkest before day and I cannot help thinking that the man who owns his cattle and land free of debt will come out alright. The trouble with so many cattlemen is they are badly in debt." As an official of the State Association he had followed closely its affairs through the depressing years following World War I.

In his address, therefore, before the Annual Meeting of the Association in 1930 Hobart struck the heart of the whole

¹⁹ Robert J. Kleberg, Jr., Kingsville, Texas, to Congressman John N. Garner, Washington, D. C., October 9, 1932. Hobart Letter Files.

problem of the cattle industry in the first paragraph of his address when he declared that, "What we need is not the extreme range of high prices that we have sometimes experienced as much as the stabilization of our business." In discussing the tariff he observed that, "it has been beyond my understanding why congressmen in the past representing agricultural districts would vote to place the products of the farmers and ranchers on the free list, while the great industries of the East enjoyed protection. In the meantime," he continued, "we have travelled far from the time when the good old Democrat of West Texas said he 'voted for free wool and only missed it by four cents'." Hobart pronounced the act creating the Federal Farm Board, June 15, 1929, as one of the "most constructive and far-reaching pieces of legislation in its line that has ever been enacted." He strongly urged the adoption of a treaty with Mexico for the control of the foot and mouth disease and rinderpest among the live stock of the two nations.

Hobart was re-elected President of the Association at the San Angelo meeting. In his address to the Convention at its annual meeting at Corpus Christi in 1931, Hobart declared that the passage of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act was the most important piece of legislation passed during the year. He believed that it would have "far-reaching effects on our industry," even though the ten percent duty on hides was not sufficiently high. Other important matters discussed before the Convention were: the validation of land surveys in West Texas; a higher tariff duty on hides; discriminatory rate legislation; cattle theft, taxation, and other matters pertaining to the industry.²⁰ Charles A. Ewing, President of the National Livestock Marketing Association, formerly a cowhand on the LE Ranch in the Texas Panhandle, in addressing the Convention at the Corpus Christi meeting in 1931, struck a significant

²⁰ See Hobart's addresses to the Convention in *The Cattleman* for April 1930 and 1931.

note in the trend of the cattle industry when he contrasted the new West as one of cooperative efficiency as against the old West of romantic individualism. "Better correlation of our supplies with the market demand," said Ewing, "will bring about better conditions in the industry".²¹

Hobart's two years of service as President of the Cattle Raisers' Association broadened and intensified his interest in the affairs of the Association. Moreover, his position as Manager and Executor of the JA Ranch properties made him alert to every change and trend in the cattle industry. He studied these trends carefully and corresponded with cattlemen and congressmen from all over the nation in his efforts to determine the future of large ranches as well as the cattle industry in general. Hobart was apprehensive as to the effects of the Government policy on the future of the cattle industry. He felt that the government which had "consistently opposed paternalism" under the old school of statesmen was drifting away from its sound basic policies of free enterprise toward chaos and confusion. He deplored the "orgy of public spending" of the Roosevelt administration which had "burdened the cattlemen as never before." In discussing the trend of the times Hobart said he felt like "the bewildered Injun" who could not find his wigwam, and when asked if he was lost replied, "Injun not lost; wigwam lost."

During his last years Hobart became more doubtful as to the future of the cattle industry and he recognized clearly the physical limitations of large ranches in the years ahead. After almost fifty years of first hand study and observation of lands and ranches in Texas he concluded that,

The large ranches will continue as a Texas institution under two conditions. First, it will probably continue indefinitely as the leading industry in much of the Trans-Pecos area where the semi-arid climate, character of soil and terrain make crop growing impractical except in irrigated areas. Secondly, there will be large scale ranching in broken territory in other sections of the State,

²¹ *The Cattleman*, April, 1931, pp. 17-18.

notably in the hilly areas of North Central Texas, on the narrow strip of broken land at the foot of the caprock which bounds the high plains, and in many sections of Southwest Texas. There are still some large bodies of land devoted to cattle raising on the great plains, but these will ultimately be turned to crop growing.²²

Thus by 1935 the cattle industry had definitely entered a new era. Ranching on a large scale was almost at an end and, with few exceptions, cattlemen were no longer devoting their efforts solely to the production of beef. The cattle industry had merged with agriculture to produce an era of stock farming which has become the dominant industry in West Texas. The Anglo-American cattle ranch had wrought well as a vanguard to settlement on the West Texas plains, but it could not survive in the struggle with the greater social and economic forces which it had largely created. The cattle ranch was first modified by the introduction of windmills, barbed wire, and railroads. The second revolution in ranching came with the introduction of the automobile and truck, paved highways, and even the radio and airplane.

Moreover, the merging of agriculture and stock raising has given greater economic stability to both industries, and the cattle industry has become somewhat steadied and secure. Fifty years of development and transition have done away with much of the method and technique of the old ranching era. Spanish longhorns have given way to Anglo-American purebreds; horses have been replaced largely by trucks, and distance has been eliminated. Indeed the cattle industry has become inextricably bound up with the highly complex forces of the nation and of the world. The history of the cattle industry is but another evidence of the end of provincialism and isolation in state and national affairs.

It is significant that whatever of the old ranching era is preserved will be found in the hill region of Central West Texas

²² MS. "The Texas Cattle Industry", by T. D. Hobart, June 3, 1929. Hobart Letter Files.

and in the Trans-Pecos area where the Anglo-American cattle industry had its beginnings and where so much of its romance has been recorded. Perhaps the little city of Stamford, with its annual July 4th rodeo celebration, best symbolizes what is left of the old ranching era in West Texas, and this institution will live and grow as long as men love and ride horses trained in the art of following cattle.

The cattle industry, through the cattle ranch, has filled the pages of West Texas history with both romance and achievement. It is, therefore, with a tinge of sadness and regret that the old cattle ranch with its historic Spanish longhorns, its strong and enduring Spanish remudas, and its strong and sturdy men must be recorded as an institution of an age that is past. But history is only the record of changes, whether of progress or decay, and Time brings its inevitable changes. The same forces of the modern and scientific era that revolutionized the cattle industry prepared the way for a new bonanza in the industrial development of West Texas—the oil industry.

OIL AND GAS ON THE WHITE DEER LANDS

DF WHEN T. D. HOBART took over the management of the White Deer lands in 1903, George Tyng had just closed a deal for the sale of 107,520 acres of land in Carson and Hutchinson counties to Colonel Burk Burnett of Fort Worth for a consideration of \$284,928, or \$2.65 per acre. This tract was a portion of the 631,000 acres that Frederick de P. Foster and C. C. Cuyler of New York took over from the Francklyn Land and Cattle Company in 1887-1888 when the company went broke. Foster and Cuyler sold debenture bonds against this land in England and this sale was made largely to satisfy the English bondholders. Mr. Russell Benedict, a law partner of Foster, was given power of attorney to transfer title to the purchasers of the White Deer lands upon payment of \$2.50 an acre to the New York and Texas Land Company, Limited, which still held a first lien on the land. Mr. Andrew Kingsmill, a banker of London, who represented the English bondholders, came to Texas in 1902 and worked out an agreement whereby the 6666 (Four-Six) Pasture was to be transferred to Burk Burnett. Judge Benedict was sent to Texas in 1903 to close the deal.

Hobart's first assignment with the White Deer Lands was to survey and determine the boundaries of the 6666 Pasture. He was assisted by Mr. M. K. Brown, a nephew of Kingsmill, who had just arrived from England to enter the employ of the White Deer Lands. Benedict accompanied the surveying party for "an outing" and, while on this trip, was subjected to many of the hardships of camp life on the prairies. When the survey was completed the lands were conveyed to Burk Burnett. "Little did any of us think at that time that the discovery of

oil in the Panhandle would be made on this very property that was being surveyed out," said Mr. Brown.¹

In the same year that Hobart and Brown were running the survey lines in the 6666 Pasture, Charles N. Gould, then a professor at the University of Oklahoma, made a survey of the lands along the Canadian River. Gould was working under the direction of the United States Geological Survey. The Gould survey was being made for the purpose of finding out about the water resources of the Canadian River Valley in the Texas Panhandle, including streams, springs, and underground water, and also for the purpose of locating any feasible reservoir sites.

The Gould survey had important consequences, not only for the future discovery of water resources in the Canadian River Valley, but also for the discovery of oil and gas in the Texas Panhandle. In 1903 Gould first saw the Permian and Triassic rock formations along the Canadian River in the Texas Panhandle. In 1905 he discovered "the white rock dipping to the east and disappearing beneath the water" of the Canadian River near the mouth of Pitcher Creek. This afterwards came to be known as the Alibates dolomite, and became the key bed from which geologists afterwards ran levels when they surveyed many of the anticlines and domes in the present oil and gas fields. Gould completed his work and made his report. "I embalmed the facts in a government repository from which in the natural course of events it would never be exposed, and promptly proceeded to forget about the whole thing," he wrote a few years afterwards.²

In 1908 Gould organized the Oklahoma Geological Survey and became a consulting geologist with offices at Oklahoma City. In 1916 Mr. M. C. Nobles, a wholesale grocer of Ama-

¹ M. K. Brown and A. H. Doucette, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, August 21, 1944. "The White Deer Lands made a profit of fifteen cents an acre on this land," said Mr. Doucette.

² Charles N. Gould, *The Geology and Water Resources of the Eastern Portion of the Panhandle of Texas*, Paper No. 154, Washington, 1906; Gould, *The Geology and Water Resources of the Western Portion of the Panhandle of Texas*, Paper No. 191, Washington, 1907. Gould (MS) "The discovery of the Panhandle Oil and Gas Field." Files Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon, Texas.

rillo, and Mr. T. J. Moore, a travelling salesman for the firm, secured the services of Gould in examining lands near Tishomingo, Oklahoma, to determine its oil possibilities. After running his surveys Gould reported that there was little prospect for oil. He was then asked if he knew any place in the Texas Panhandle where oil might be found. After pondering this question for some time, he remembered the anticlines and domes which he saw along the Canadian River in 1903, 1904, and 1905. He was employed immediately by Nobles and Moore to come to the Texas Panhandle to make an examination of the structure. After several months work by Gould and Mr. Robert S. Dewey, a favorable report was made and a location for drilling was recommended. The site selected was the John Ray Butte, near the head of Big Canyon Creek.³

As a result of Gould's recommendations a 57,000-acre lease was obtained, located largely on the R. B. Masterson and Lee Bivins ranches in Potter County, and the Amarillo Oil Company was formed. The original members of this corporation were: M. C. Nobles and H. A. Nobles, M. W. Cunningham, J. W. Crudgington, J. M. Neeley, A. G. Stanley, T. J. Moore, J. S. Storm, and S. F. Sullenburger. The Landergin Brothers, C. T. Herring, Lee Bivins, Frank Storm, and R. B. Masterson were later added. This company, after drilling a year and two months, completed the first well in the Texas Panhandle, the Hapgood well, at a cost of \$70,000, with a depth of 2605 feet, and it produced 15,000,000 cubic feet of gas per day. W. A. McSpadden drilled the second gas well in the Panhandle field in 1919 on the Masterson Ranch, and the third gasser, the Haines et Al Tuck Trigg No. 1, was drilled by L. L. Caldwell and J. G. McClintock in 1920. This third gas well was located

³ Charles N. Gould (MS), Panhandle-Plains Museum. Gould says, "Theodore Roosevelt is, in a certain sense, responsible for the Panhandle oil and gas field. For, if Theodore Roosevelt had not persuaded Congress to pass the Reclamation Act in 1902 your speaker would not have made a geological survey of the Panhandle during the first decade of the present century, and if this survey had not been made at that time is very likely that the discovery of gas in this region would have been delayed for many years."

eighteen miles northwest of Amarillo and was the first well to show helium gas.⁴ On April 6, 1921, the Gulf Production Company drilled the first oil well in the Panhandle field. This well, known as the Burnett No. 2, was located on the 6666 Ranch in Carson County, section 106, Block 5, I&GN Surevy, and had an initial production of 175 barrels of oil daily.

The idea that oil and gas might be discovered in the Texas Panhandle was not entirely new in 1919 and 1921. For some years there had been talk of finding oil and gas in this region. Hobart wrote Doctor William B. Phillips at Austin on February 22, 1905, and asked him to analyze a sample of water from Panhandle soil. "I have a friend who has a peculiar formation on his place where the water comes out at a seep or spring, it is impregnated with a peculiar greasy brown substance that I have taken to indicate the presence of iron, but my friend believes it indicates oil." Again on December 22, 1906, he wrote W. M. Williams at White Deer: "In regard to the party who might desire to bore for oil or gas, I would like to know a little more definitely what inducement the party might want to bore to a depth of say not less than 2,000 feet, provided he did not strike artesian water or oil at a less depth. If I think the matter will interest my people I will take it up with them".⁵

These ideas lay dormant, however, and when the first oil and gas wells were completed they created much interest and excitement. Gould and his staff were kept busy for months studying structures and locating domes. But of all the locations made by Gould in the Texas Panhandle he always regarded the 6666 dome north of Panhandle in Carson County with most affec-

⁴ N. D. Bartlett, *Amarillo News Globe*, September 19, 1943; Eugene S. Blasdel, Amarillo, to J. Evetts Haley, July 3, 1926; J. G. McClintock, Pampa, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, June 13, 1947; Earl Vandale, Amarillo, to L. F. Sheffy, August 30, 1947. "After the first gas well was completed Mr. Henry Nobles went to Kansas City, Missouri, where he made an agreement with Mr. Albert R. Jones of the Mission Oil Company to drill eight wells in the Panhandle field for a half undivided interest in the 57,000-acre tract of the Amarillo Oil Company. Jones completed his contract of eight wells with no dry holes," said Mr. Vandale.

⁵ White Deer Files, III, p. 210.

tion, next to his "first love," the John Ray dome.⁶ From the time these discovery wells were completed until 1925 the Burnett Pasture remained the chief source of Panhandle crude oil. Out of a total of forty-nine producing wells in the Panhandle in 1925, Carson County had twenty-seven wells which produced 2885 barrels in September, 1925. Hutchinson County had sixteen wells which produced 1490 barrels in the same month.⁷ It was from the Carson County field, therefore, that the Panhandle field was extended toward the north and east after 1925.

The discovery wells were located almost midway between Panhandle, the county seat of Carson County, and Pampa, the seat of justice in Gray County. Each town claimed that the oil and gas field was within its jurisdiction, and, as a result, a strong rivalry developed between the two towns. Members of the defunct chamber of commerce at Pampa went out individually and helped build a road straight to the wells. Citizens of Panhandle were equally enthusiastic in road building. When the roads were completed, however, it was found that the wells were three-quarter of a mile nearer to Pampa than to Panhandle. In order to secure further benefits which would accrue from the oil and gas field, the still defunct chamber of commerce at Pampa decided to hold a big celebration and banquet, honoring W. B. Pyron and his force of the Gulf Oil Company. About fifty local citizens attended the banquet at the Schneider Hotel where much enthusiasm was manifested.⁸

This superficial burst of enthusiasm was to receive an acid test in the years immediately ahead. For five years following the discovery of gas and oil in the Panhandle the promoters of the field encountered all kinds of difficulties in establishing the area as a proven oil and gas field. The uniqueness of the geologi-

⁶ The location on the 6666 dome was made by Gould and E. S. Blasdel of Amarillo, March, 1919, between Hall and Short creeks, not far from the headquarters of the 6666 Ranch from which the dome was named. Charles N. Gould MS, as cited.

⁷ Grady Triplett, *The Oil and Gas Weekly*, October 23, 1925, p. 25.

⁸ M. K. Brown and A. H. Doucette, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, August 21, 1944.

cal structure of the region, climatic conditions, long distances from processing plants and trunk lines, inadequate transportation and storage facilities, and meager capital and equipment were only a few of the obstacles encountered in developing and proving the field.

The Panhandle field extends (in 1947) in a northwest-southeast direction from southern Sherman County across Moore, Hutchinson, Gray, and Wheeler counties for a distance of about 150 miles and varies in width from five to twenty miles. The White Deer lands are in the center of this field. The oil and gas reservoirs in the field are found along a submerged ridge of granite mountains which extends from the Moore-Potter county line eastward into Oklahoma, where it has been identified with the Wichita-Arbuckle Mountain Range. There are three main producing zones in this area, the granite wash, the dolomite, and the lime. A uniform water table underlies the field at about sea level. The oil production zone is 100 to 300 feet above the water level, but sometimes oil is found at the water level, and occasionally it is found below the water level. The big flow of gas is encountered about 100 to 300 feet above the oil. The surface elevation varies from 2400 to 3400 feet above sea level. The initial rock pressure is 430 pounds per square inch and is noticeably uniform. So far all of the oil in the Panhandle field has been found north of the granite ridge, or in re-entrant bays.⁹

The Panhandle oil field, because of its peculiar geological structure, was perhaps, in its early stages of development, the

⁹ Report of the Bureau of Mines, *Oil and Gas Journal*, October 21, 1926, p. 40; Grady Triplett, *The Oil Weekly*, October 23, 1925, p. 26; N. D. Bartlett, *Amarillo News Globe*, to L. F. Sheffy, August 15, 1947. The writer makes no claims to any scientific knowledge of the oil and gas industry, nor to any original contributions in this chapter. I have secured my information from a number of reliable sources and have attempted to put this information into readable form, to the end that the lay reader will have a better general understanding of the history and the development of the Panhandle oil and gas field and their relation to other phases of institutional development of the Panhandle. I am indebted to Mr. N. D. Bartlett, Oil Editor of the *Amarillo News Globe*, and Mr. Earl Vandale of Amarillo, both long time members of the oil fraternity, for reading the manuscript of this chapter and making many helpful suggestions.

most important laboratory in the United States for scientific experimentation and research, for improvement in the technique of oil and gas production, and for the study of oil and gas conservation. "The Panhandle oil and gas field has sometimes been cited as an example of the practical application of scientific research," wrote Doctor Charles N. Gould. "There was absolutely no thought in the minds of any of us who did the first real geological work in this region that oil and gas might ever be found in the Panhandle. We were working on other things," he said, "and had anyone suggested that the area would in time develop into the largest gas field in the world, we would undoubtedly have given him the horse laugh." N. D. Bartlett, Oil Editor of the *Amarillo News Globe* declared that, "development has determined as facts, many things concerning this field that were only theories at the outset." Roye Munsell, in the *Oil Weekly*, July 30, 1926, called attention to the fact that the, "peculiar conditions which obtain in the Texas Panhandle field are making it necessary for the operators there to devise and develop many special operating methods in order to secure anything near maximum results at a reasonable cost." General Ernest O. Thompson, Chairman of the Texas Railroad Commission, added the statement that, "Out of the Panhandle field have come most of the legislative and administrative attempts to conserve and regulate the gas resources of this state."

The period from 1919 to 1926, therefore, was a period of experimentation as well as a period of discovery and development in the Panhandle oil and gas field. Like many other phases of development on the western frontier, small individual capitalists entered the Panhandle oil field first, and these small scale operators were followed by the larger capitalistic concerns. "The Texas Panhandle field was forced to a showdown by small operators and individual lease owners gaining the attention of Oklahoma and Kansas operators, who were without an active field in their respective states during the early part of 1926 and

selected the Panhandle for a play on its potentialities," said H. H. King.¹⁰

These small operators worked against tremendous odds in developing the Panhandle field before the big companies came in. They had to divide their leases into small tracts and let them out to their friends and the speculating public in order to keep up annual rentals on the remaining portion of their leases. Not only was their capital limited, but their equipment was also meager and inadequate to do the necessary work in developing the field on a large scale.¹¹ Fortunately there were few dry holes drilled in the area, and this finally convinced larger concerns of the potentialities of the field.

All of the first wells in the Panhandle were drilled with standard cable tools, despite the fact that the geological structure was, "the most difficult for drilling of any in the United States. The first 450 feet is a layer of sand, mostly quicksand. A salt layer is found at a thousand feet and lime shells at 2200 or 2300 feet. In some wells there is a 150-foot cave just before lime is struck. One strikes quicksand as far down as 1200 feet. This layer at that depth is thirty or forty feet and is most difficult to get through because of cave ins. Where one drills too fast, sand often runs into the hole and fills it up".¹² Drillers bore the brunt of these and many other handicaps in the early development of the Panhandle field. They had many ups and downs and they encountered many dangers during the experimental period. Well drillers had to study and learn first hand the formations of the Panhandle field, and then they had to find the best methods of drilling in these formations, said W. C.

¹⁰ *Oil and Gas Weekly*, February 18, 1927, p. 68.

¹¹ "As a result of the drilling started in 1926 hundreds of people in Amarillo and surrounding towns invested millions with oil companies that drilled on acreage ranging from ten to 500 acres. In that form of promotion about twelve million dollars was invested of which eight million dollars had to be chalked up on the loss side of the ledger. In other words Amarillo people absorbed about eight million dollars worth of worthless oil stocks in the first two years of the boom." N. D. Bartlett, *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, XII, p. 50.

¹² D. W. Rabar, Borger, to L. F. Sheffy, December 28, 1945.

McSpadden, one of the pioneer drillers in the Panhandle field. "In more recent years," he continued,

Great improvement in the tools for drilling has been an important factor in overcoming earlier difficulties. In drilling the first wells in the Panhandle I moved my rig, already set up, and placed it over the hole and began drilling. I drilled for companies at so much per foot. Several times I had my rig burned down. It was up to the company to supply a new rig or else lose the chance for a well. I could have been immensely rich if I had taken a chance in drilling and drilled some wells of my own. I let the companies take the chance. However, oil companies sometimes caught a driller or an independent small owner with funds exhausted and took over and financed the well at a small additional cost and made immense profits. I know one company that found a driller down more than 2,000 feet and was out of funds. The company took over, bought him out for a song, paid him so much a foot for drilling and completing the well. The well was a fine producer, but the company did not even buy the driller a suit of clothes for his services.¹³

All of the experimental drilling in the Panhandle field was done by independent drillers and small independent companies. The big companies did not come in until about 1925 and 1926. When the larger concerns entered the field the rotary drill was introduced and was used for drilling down to the pay sand. This greatly increased the tempo of drilling in the Panhandle and contributed much toward the "oil boom" of 1926.

The difficulties encountered by drillers in the Panhandle field would form a long and interesting chapter within itself. Drilling through the treacherous quicksands was both difficult and expensive. The high paraffin content in the Panhandle crude oil often clogged pipes and choked wells. Moreover, the high sulphur content in the Panhandle crude was often detrimental and dangerous to drillers. Hydrogen sulphide in the gas affected the eyes, and, if breathed long enough, would "knock out" the workers. Some workers died from breathing this gas.¹⁴ In short a heavy toll of human life was taken in the Panhandle field as a result of exposure to poison gases, and from exploding rocks and fires caused by high pressure and friction

¹³ W. A. McSpadden, Canyon, to L. F. Sheffy, August 24, 1945.

¹⁴ Report, Bureau of Mines, *Oil and Gas Journal*, October 21, 1926, p. 40 and following.

set off by dropping a wrench against a pipe, or by someone unconsciously lighting a cigarette.

The difficulties that drillers encountered in getting to the oil and gas reservoirs were multiplied when the producers attempted to get the crude oil to the top of the ground and into the storage tanks. The high paraffin content of the crude often clogged pipes and had to be burned out, usually with oil heated to a high temperature. The high viscosity of the crude caused it to congeal when exposed to the low winter temperatures of the Panhandle to such an extent that it would not form a level surface and, therefore, would not register on the meter in the storage tanks. In addition to these difficulties, the low rock pressure made the lift of the oil difficult and expensive. These conditions forced the producers to do much experimenting in their efforts to reduce the cost and increase the efficiency in getting the oil to the surface. "Some of the companies in the Panhandle field have used hot water and let it stand on the face of the sand to dissolve the paraffin. Others have used butane or high gravity gasoline to dissolve the paraffin. . . .

"In our experiments we have come in contact with problems which have not been dealt with in any other field in the United States, because if we are able to make the gas do the work on the oil it necessarily must expand and in so doing drops in temperature".¹⁵

By 1927 other major difficulties confronted oil producers in the Panhandle. One of the most serious of these was Conate water which began to affect wells in certain parts of the area. The rapid spread of water, especially in the Borger field, resulted in many wells being drowned out. Water intrusion also increased the cost and decreased the volume of production in the Panhandle. Swabbing, pumping, and the air or gas lift

¹⁵ E. O. Bennett, "Production Difficulties in the Panhandle," *Oil and Gas Journal*, October 21, 1926, p. 154 and following; W. C. McSpadden, Canyon, Texas, to L. F. Sheffy, August 24, 1945; James D. (Jimmy) Thompson, Amarillo, to L. F. Sheffy, August 5, 1945.

were used to remove water from wells, but without success. Escape of large amounts of gas at the top of lime formations, drilling wells too deep, and shooting them to heavily were thought to be some of the causes for the rise of water in these wells. A. F. Hinton believed that ninety-five percent of the wells were affected by January, 1927. In discussing the water problem in the Panhandle field in March, 1927, Hinton stated that, "The water situation may be summed up with the statement that water now comprises 17.4 percent of the field's total output, as compared with 15 percent last December. In Hutchinson County, out of 775 producing wells, 464 are making a measurable quantity of water. In Carson County, 40 out of 78 producing wells are making from 1 percent to 60 percent water. In Gray County, with 104 producing wells, no water is reported".¹⁶

Production problems in the Panhandle field were further complicated by the more difficult question of transportation. The discovery wells were located in the rough pasture lands of the Canadian River Valley, and for several years the Panhandle field was isolated. This made it necessary to build highways and pipelines, and to establish rail connections with the Santa Fe line some thirty miles distant. When the field was extended across the Canadian toward the north, transportation difficulties became even more serious. It was estimated that trucks, hauling supplies, would have to travel 150 miles to make contact between two points on opposite sides of the river. As long as such conditions existed the extension and development of the field was necessarily slow, difficult, and expensive. In September, 1926, the Austin Bridge Company was given a permit to build a toll bridge across the Canadian.¹⁷ In September of the

¹⁶ A. F. Hinton, *National Petroleum News*, March 9, 1927, p. 23.

¹⁷ According to the contract seventy percent of the receipts from tolls were to go into a sinking fund and thirty percent to the bridge company. When the sinking fund reached \$135,000 tolls were to cease and the bridge was to be turned over to the county. *The Oil Weekly*, July 30, 1926, pp. 139-140.

same year the Isom-Borger-Panhandle tap line was completed to Panhandle, highways were laid out and improved, and with this one phase of the transportation problem was partially solved.

With improved transportation facilities the cumulative production of oil and gas increased rapidly. This forced the producers either to provide more transportation and storage facilities or restrict the output of oil and gas. Pipe line companies came to the rescue and by 1925-26 several pipelines had been laid from the Carson County area to the loading racks at Panhandle, Kingsmill, and Amarillo. In 1926 these pipelines were pouring more than 100,000 barrels of crude oil daily into the oil racks on the railroad lines. This caused a shortage in tank cars and, just at the time the Panhandle field was reaching its all time peak in production, oil was being piled up at the loading racks faster than it could be transported to processing plants. Railway lines were further congested by the bumper grain crop in the Panhandle area in 1926. Thus shipment of oil supplies were delayed, gushers were being opened in the field, and the clogging of the whole industry was threatened.¹⁸

Climatic conditions in the Panhandle also hounded the pipeline companies. Since the high paraffin content in Panhandle crude caused it to congeal when exposed to temperatures above fifty degrees Fahrenheit it was difficult to move the crude oil through the lines. This led to another phase of experimentation. The crude oil was treated with chemicals or it was passed over heated wire coils at intervals every few miles to prevent congealing and clogging of the pipelines. Pipelines also had to be laid thirty-six inches below the surface in order to get below the freezing line. The rolling character of the terrain sometimes made it necessary to dig pipeline ditches as much as

¹⁸ H. H. King, *The Oil Weekly*, August 6, 1926, pp. 29-30.

twenty feet deep in order to lessen the difficulty of putting the oil through the bended pipelines.¹⁹

Transportation problems caused pipeline companies to hesitate to invest large sums in building lines to connect the Panhandle field with trunk lines until the area was definitely a proven field. Inadequate transportation and storage facilities also brought forth a warning from the Texas Railroad Commission to all operators in the field that penalties would be imposed on those who brought in wells not fully served by pipeline or steel storage facilities. As a result a huge tank building program got under way in the Panhandle. Hundreds of tank builders were shipped in to relieve the situation. It was estimated in August, 1926, that when all tanks under construction were completed, the Panhandle would have a combined storage capacity of more than nine million barrels. By the middle of 1926 several large companies, including the Gulf, the Humble, the Magnolia, the Marland, the Pantex, the Plains, the Prairie, the Phillips, and the Sinclair companies had entered the Panhandle field and were storing and shipping oil out of the field. Both producing and pipeline companies overplayed their hand on erecting steel storage in the Panhandle, said the *Oil Weekly*, "as is illustrated by the fact that storage has been provided for 23,954,500 barrels, but the stocks only reached a high mark of 18,796,520 barrels in July (1927)".²⁰

With the entrance of these large corporations into the Panhandle the permanence of the oil industry was assured. Many of the earlier difficulties had been overcome by the improved technique in oil and gas production, the boom period was sub-

¹⁹ A spring shower at Kingsmill in 1926 caused some cold rain water to seep down into a pipe trench and cooled the pipe slightly with the result that in a few hours the pressure increased from 700 to 1200 pounds and the delivery through the pipes dropped from 125 to thirty barrels per hour. *The Oil Weekly*, July 30, 1926, p. 132 and following.

²⁰ *The Oil Weekly*, August 13, 1926, p. 26, and November 18, 1927, p. 30. The November issue of *The Oil Weekly* stated that, "Natural gasoline is proving to be an item in the Texas Panhandle, and during October the production was estimated at 8,885,000 gallons, with about 6,253,000 gallons in storage at the close of October."

siding, and the field was settling down to a normal, steady production.

From Carson County oil development was gradually extended south and east into Gray and Wheeler counties, and also toward the north into Hutchinson and Moore counties. The first oil well in Gray County was the Homer F. Wilcox No. 1 Worley Reynolds, located five miles south of Pampa on the Worley-Reynolds Ranch, part of the White Deer Lands. This well was completed January 31, 1925, for an initial production of sixty barrels per day. On June 12, 1926, a 700-barrel well was brought in by Clark and Baldrige and this started an extensive drilling campaign in the area. The Dixon Creek Company brought in a 10,000-barrel well on the Smith Ranch in the Borger area, and this resulted in an extensive drilling program in South Hutchinson County. Moore County got its first producer in 1926 and a decade later this county took the lead in the production of gas when the Phillips Petroleum Company completed a well in 1936 which tested 176,000,000 cubic feet daily. By 1933 the field was extended into Wheeler County,²¹ and by 1946 Sherman County was a proven gas field, and an extensive drilling campaign was begun in this sector.

The year 1926, however, was the banner year for the widespread development in the Panhandle field. In that year one hundred ten separate corporations with a combined capital of \$15,000,000 and representing 5,350,000 shares were organized in the Panhandle to develop leases. The major part of this capital represented investments of local citizens who were residents of the Panhandle. "All of these concerns listed their headquarters at Amarillo or nearby cities." "A queer assortment of oil company names have been originated by the promoters, and many of these names bear out the hazard involved in making a success of the venture. The geographical locations of the holdings of a company figure prominently in the selection of

²¹ N. D. Bartlett, *Amarillo News Globe*, September 19, 1943.

names, while some of the promoters selected short and catchy titles. Animals, creeks, numerals, nationalities, heavenly bodies, feminine names, railroads, counties and towns were drawn on to supply the names for some of the companies," said *The Oil Weekly*.²²

By the end of 1926 the large oil companies looked upon the Panhandle as a major field, and, because of the peculiar conditions and the unusual geological structure of the area, they had gathered much valuable data in the development of a technique that resulted in more efficient production, increased yields, and greater conservation. As a result of these developments a new industry of great productive wealth had been drilled deeply into the soil of the Texas Panhandle.

The development of the oil industry in the Panhandle was accompanied by a rapid increase in population. Panhandle towns doubled and trebled their population, and mushroom towns grew up over night. Hutchinson County, a ranching country in 1925, became a land of oil derricks and mobile population centers in 1926. Isom-Borger-Phillips became a bustling hive of 16,000 souls in a twelve month period. Oil camps sprang up all along the Canadian River Valley. In 1926 Panhandle was second only to Chicago in railway freight tonnage on the Santa Fe lines, and Amarillo became a booming business center for the oil business. Hobart wrote one of his clients February 26, 1924:

It looks as though there was going to be quite a little stir in the way of oil development in the Pampa country. The well southeast of Pampa about 12 miles has developed a tremendous flow of gas, and the people in charge have strong hopes of securing oil. Another well is to be put down shortly about 5 or 6 miles south of Pampa with a strong possibility that another well will be put down about 4 miles northeast of Pampa. On August 2, 1926, he

²² The following is a partial list of some of the names of these companies: The Alamo, Apex, Badger, Black Diamond, Bear Creek, Canadian River, Center Dome, Civit, Double Five, Farmers, Golden Eagle, Great Plains, Gopher, Homestead, Inspiration, Irish-American Royalty, Lucky Strike, Neptune, Polecat, Salt Fork, Skyrocket, Straight Eight, Sunburst, Sunrise, Triangle, White Deer, and Wolf Creek. For the complete list see *The Oil Weekly*, March 4, 1927, p. 38.

wrote that, the excitement is still running high here. The town is growing by leaps and bounds and if most of the locations for oil wells already made should prove a success there is no telling to what lengths it will go. Of course somebody is going to hold the sack sooner or later. I am having numerous chances to make trades with these promoters for drilling contracts, both on our place at Hoover and on the Washita, but I prefer to see some good hard cash in hand to start with. Just a short distance south of Pampa, the oil derricks loom up like the shipping masts in New York harbor in the old sailor days. A few days later, August 13th, Hobart observed that, everything is in a whirl and bustle here now, laying off additions to the town in every direction; in fact everything almost is being changed. When they get to crowding too hard I think we will put everything we have on the market. It is interesting for a time, but as an old friend of mine said years ago about riding broncos, if he knew he were going to live a thousand years he would not mind putting in two or three years at it, but under the circumstances, life is too brief. In his further correspondence Hobart wrote on August 21, 1936, that, we are having a great boom at this place owing to the discovery of oil near here. In fact one well is to be started in the city limits. There are some eighty oil derricks already erected within a few miles of this place. There are probably four times as many people here and in the vicinity as there were six months ago. Of course a good many nice people are coming in but a lot of 'Roosevelt's undesirables' also, and the old town which I had considerable part in is not likely to be a very desirable place to live in for sometime.²³

The development of oil and gas in the Panhandle multiplied the productive wealth of the area, and brought wealth and economic security to hundreds of Panhandle citizens. Scores of Hobart's colonizers who had struggled for years to hold their land and develop their properties acquired substantial sums of money for leases and royalties and some of them acquired considerable wealth. In 1912 farmers on the White Deer lands did not have enough money to buy their seed wheat. Frederick de P. Foster put \$100,000 in the First National Bank at Pampa and instructed the bank to loan money to farmers to purchase seed wheat. But a better day was dawning. In 1912 Hobart conveyed title to several thousand acres of White Deer lands to farmers and stock raisers. One sale was made of 6,038 acres located a few miles southeast of Pampa for a consideration of

²³ T. D. Hobart to E. B. Purcell, Manhattan, Kansas, February 26, 1924; T. D. Hobart to Fred Warren, Montpelier, Vermont, August 2nd and August 13th, 1926; T. D. Hobart to Honorable E. M. Harvey, Montpelier, Vermont, August 21, 1926. Hobart Letter Files.

\$39,247. In 1926 the purchaser refused a million dollars for the oil rights on this tract. Another party who purchased land in the same vicinity tried to get Hobart to take the land back. Hobart persuaded him to "hang on." He did so and in 1926 leased an 80-acre tract for \$1,000 per acre. A third party purchased some fourteen or fifteen sections of White Deer lands. After the first discovery wells were brought in on the 6666 dome west of this tract, the purchasers sold forty-five percent of their lands and began leasing the remaining portion out in small tracts at from \$10 to \$1,000 per acre, retaining one-eighth of the royalty. In 1926 the owners refused a million dollars for one-half interest in the royalty on 4,000 acres.²⁴ Such instances could be multiplied, but suffice it to say that the development of the oil industry in the Texas Panhandle was a great boon to owners of White Deer lands and adjacent lands in the vicinity.

The story of the production of natural gas in the Panhandle field is a long and interesting one, and although gas production is closely related to the production of oil, it deserves to be treated in a separate chapter. The story can only be briefly summarized here.

When the Panhandle field was opened gas production was secondary to the production of oil. However, since many wells produced both gas and oil there was an enormous amount of gas wasted by being blown into the air. It was estimated in 1926 that one hundred million cubic feet of gas was being wasted daily in this manner in the Panhandle field. The Petroleum Economic Service, in a bulletin published in 1933, declared that as a result of an act of the Texas legislature passed in that year legalizing the stripping of dry gas, five hundred million

²⁴ *The Oil Weekly*, October 14, 1927, p. 34; M. K. Brown, Pampa, to L. F. Sheffy, August 21, 1944; T. D. Hobart to Fred Warren, Montpelier, Vermont, February 14 and October 15, 1926.

cubic feet of gas was being blown into the air daily. "What is going on in the Panhandle at this time," said the report, "is just another chapter in the waste of natural resources which began with the extermination of the buffalo for the hides and horns, and which included along the way the waste of most of the country's magnificent forests, and other natural resources".²⁵

This wanton waste of natural gas in the Panhandle field had important consequences: it led to the passage of a series of acts by the Texas legislature which were designed to conserve the gas resources of the state; in the second place it resulted in new uses and new markets being found for gas, other than for lighting and heating purposes. Some of the most important by-products of this legislation are the forty odd carbon black plants in the Panhandle which in 1938 were producing seventy-six percent of the world's carbon black supply, a total production up to that time of 1,591,865,000 pounds, with a burning capacity of 978,000,000 cubic feet daily. Moreover, the Amarillo helium plant produces approximately ninety-eight percent of the world's helium supply, and almost a dozen terminal lines carry millions of cubic feet of gas and millions of barrels of oil to distant markets to warm the homes of millions of people, and to furnish motive power and lubrication for the busy wheels of industry.

To supply these demands the Panhandle reservoir had produced in 1938 a total of 7,600,000,000,000 cubic feet of gas, and at the end of 1946 the total had reached the staggering sum of 13,906,763,246,000 cubic feet to make the Texas Panhandle the largest gas field in the world. In addition to this the

²⁵ *Report of Petroleum Economic Service*, Volume IV, No. 7. Published at Houston, Texas.

Panhandle field had produced a total of 568,571,000 barrels of oil.²⁶

When one attempts to analyze the physical energy and the economic values bound up in these fantastic sums of gas and oil it is almost beyond the conceivable grasp of the human mind. It is all the more challenging when one realizes that it all happened in one generation. From a financial and economic standpoint it is a far cry from \$2.65-acre grazing land in 1903 to land that was producing millions of dollars in gas, oil, grain, and meat in a brief quarter century. Hobart and his generation began their work in the Texas Panhandle in the horse and buggy days. They worked hard with hand tools and equipment in running survey lines, building roads and fences, drilling water wells, cultivating the soil, and doing all other work necessary in clearing a frontier land. But they laid the foundations and set up the patterns of machinery through which free enterprise and corporate wealth, aided by modern technology, could come quickly into their own in the production of vast resources in the Panhandle-Plains region.

Hobart and his generation witnessed the end of land frontiers in America and the beginning of new scientific frontiers. Indeed the colonizers of West Texas lived at the end of an epoch which in many respects had its beginning in the days of Coronado. There *was* a land of Quivira in the Texas Panhandle, but

²⁶ General Ernest O. Thompson, Chairman, Texas Railroad Commission, Austin, to L. F. Sheffy, July 12, 1947; for excellent brief discussions on oil, gas, and helium production see *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, Volume XII.

Production of Oil (barrels) in Panhandle Field by Counties:

County	No. of Wells		Ave. Daily Production		Total Production by Counties	
	1926	1927	1926	1927	1926	1947
Carson	36	120	2,730	12,085	2,194,040	29,864,690
Gray	7	118	3,025	7,300	1,296,320	98,757,982
Hutchinson	22	855	43,690	100,530	23,302,259	73,435,640
Wheeler	6	28	425	3,245	124,585	9,680,824
Moore						3,855,937

The total production of oil in the above counties from 1921-1927 was 29,929,307 barrels, 94 percent of which was obtained in 1926. H. H. King, *The Oil Weekly*, February 18, 1927, p. 68. General Ernest O. Thompson, Austin, to L. F. Sheffy, July 12, 1947; N. D. Bartlett, *Amarillo News Globe*, August 14, 1938; H. H. King, *The Oil Weekly*, February 18, 1927, p. 70. *Oil and Gas Journal*, Annual Number, January 25, 1947, p. 194.

it lay secretly hidden far beneath the quicksand beds of the Canadian and Upper Red river valleys. To Coronado, the explorer, the anticlines of the Canadian River were lonely natural wonders that impeded his progress across the West Texas plains; to Gould, the scientist, these anticlines were significant sign posts pointing the way to the vast pools of liquid gold stored securely in the deep recesses along the flanks of the submerged mountain range below.

The span of four centuries which separates the lives of the explorer and the scientist is both important and significant. It covers the entire period of frontier expansion of the Anglo-Saxons in America. It likewise extends over the period of modern scientific development, and the application of modern scientific inventions to man's every day affairs. In both instances the progress made was cumulative, and the combined technical knowledge of the centuries, added to the frontier experiences, centered in the last western frontier in America to make marvellous achievements in a brief period of time.

Hobart and his generation exemplified in a forceful manner the individual initiative, the resourcefulness, and the ingenuity which flowered in the southwestern frontier in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The West Texas frontier drew heavily on the mental and physical resources of its earliest settlers but they were not found lacking in either capacity. They labored, and endured, and achieved.

THE PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

THE PANHANDLE-PLAINS REGION is exceptional in the development of its traditions and its culture. For centuries most of the history of the Plains region of the Southwest passed into oblivion without being recorded, but when the Anglo-Americans came into the region they developed an interest in things historical before the first generation had passed. Many of the earliest Anglo-American settlers were aware of the historical and cultural importance of their achievements, and they gave much assistance in collecting and preserving the records of their past.

The reasons for this historical mindedness are obvious. As has been shown in previous chapters, the southwestern frontier was developed rapidly and many of the earliest settlers lived long enough to see the region transformed from a wilderness, inhabited by Indians and buffalo, into a prosperous ranching and stockfarming country. These early colonizers began their work of developing the resources of the region with hand tools and equipment. But soon the modern techniques of pioneering came to their assistance and they were able to achieve in one generation what it took decades, and even centuries, to do on the first American frontiers. Moreover, the first settlers on the plains came out of old frontiers whose cultures had grown to maturity and whose history had been fully recorded. When they came into the new frontiers they brought the accumulated experiences of their recorded history with them. "The Panhandle country of Texas was fortunate in having among its early settlers many strong men. They were a hardy lot—modest, fearless, patriotic. Among them were men of education and culture," said G. A. F. Parker, a pioneer settler.¹ These condi-

¹ Address, G. A. F. Parker, Hereford, Texas, at the annual meeting of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, April 11, 1930. MS. Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon.

tions gave rise to an historical consciousness which the pioneers of earlier American frontiers did not manifest.

Interest in historical developments in West Texas was first stimulated by "old settlers reunions" in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At these reunions, usually held on the fourth of July, Confederate veterans were honored guests who were eulogized on every occasion. Public addresses made by prominent leaders on these occasions expounded at length on the principles of the Declaration of Independence, or the issues involved in the Civil War, or some other historical theme. By the beginning of the twentieth century these celebrations had come to be annual affairs, and they resulted in the formation of "Old Settlers Associations" all over West Texas. These associations soon developed an interest in local history and they were an important factor in arousing a general public interest in local historical events.

One of the most typical as well as one of the most influential of these associations was the organization of "The Panhandle Old Settlers Association" at Amarillo in 1916. This organization was formed under the leadership of Judge Thomas F. Turner, T. D. Hobart, Colonel Charles Goodnight, W. H. Patrick, Mrs. Billy Dixon, Colonel R. P. Smythe and a number of other leading Panhandle pioneers. Judge Turner became the first president of the organization. With the formation of this association a definite program of collecting and preserving plains records was begun. Hobart manifested much interest in the undertaking. He began at once to collect letters, memoirs, and books relating to the early history of the plains. He wrote Turner about his plans and the president of the Association appointed an historical committee consisting of Colonel R. P. Smythe of Plainview, Judge Newton P. Willis of Canadian, and Colonel Charles Goodnight, with the request that they collect all the historical data possible relating to the Plains. On July 26, 1916, Turner wrote Hobart in part as follows:

I shall be very glad indeed if you will send me such books as you have that will be of value and also write me a statement of such points of interest as occur to you, so that we may preserve these facts, and perhaps later use them in a history of the Panhandle. This history should be written by someone who will take the time and pains to verify the historical statements made in it. It would be worse than folly for someone to undertake to write a history of the Panhandle in a loose or careless way. Every fact stated should be verified, and this verification should be thorough and complete. I am quite sure that you can be of great value along this line. If the data can be collected in the proper time, the history will be written by someone who is competent to do the work. I am not at this time concerned with who the author of the history shall be so much as I am that the data should be collected without delay.²

There were other early manifestations of the growing consciousness of the value of the traditions of the plains. In the early twentieth century "cowboy reunions" were held in various parts of West Texas. Many of these reunions have developed into permanent organizations of cowboys and cattlemen that still hold their annual meetings. The XIT Reunion at Dalhart, the annual rodeo at Stamford, and scores of other similar meetings have done much to keep alive the traditions of the cattle industry, and at the same time they have stimulated a popular and widespread interest in the history of the industry.

Simultaneous with these developments was the publication of numerous brochures, monographs, and books containing the memoirs and experiences of pioneers who became conscious of the historic value of these experiences. The work of all these agencies, though working separately, was cumulative in developing a genuine interest in things historical in the plains region of the Southwest.

It was with this background that several historical societies were organized in West Texas. The first of these organizations was The Panhandle-Plains Historical Society which was organized in 1921 by a few citizens of Canyon under the direction of the late Judge Thomas F. Turner of Amarillo and Dr. Hattie M. Anderson of the History department of the West Texas

² Hobart Letter Files, Pampa. Hobart became president of the Old Settlers Association in 1924.

State College. The purposes of this organization as stated in its constitution and by-laws are:

The collection and faithful preservation of historical materials relating to animal, plant, and human life during the past and present. . . . To collect materials relating to the Panhandle and the plains of Texas and the country immediately connected with it so as to obtain a correct record of its frontier life and later development. . . . To foster the spirit of historical research. . . . It shall endeavor to present to the coming generation the life of the old settler in such a way that it will create in them a desire to uphold, forever, the honor of the country that their forefathers wrought out of the wilderness. . . . To publish from time to time such accounts and stories as it believes will be of interest to the public.

Judge Turner was the guiding light during the formative period of the Society and became its first president. He was influential in determining and formulating the policies of the organization during the first years of its existence, and rendered valuable aid in setting up the proper machinery for its operation. He wrote the constitution and by-laws of the Society, and on July 24, 1923, he secured its charter from the State of Texas. Turner's wisdom and foresight in getting the Society into operation is clearly shown in his report at its annual meeting in 1924 in which he declared that, "There are many relics in the homes of the people of the Panhandle that could be collected . . . if the proper effort could be put forth. . . . It must be remembered that many of these relics will necessarily be lost or destroyed as the years come and go, and then it will be too late to secure them." He exhorted every member to use his influence in every way possible to give publicity to the organization and its purposes so that "the work of the Society may be carried on in the best manner, and with due diligence."

The first seven years of the life of the Society were spent largely in perfecting the organization, enlarging its membership, marking historic spots, and acquainting the public with the purposes of the organization. Addresses were made to civic clubs and public gatherings, while the press gave much timely aid through its columns in informing the public of the work of

the Society. Pioneer men and women, who had lived in the Plains region since the first settlements were made, joined the Society and gave freely of their time and effort in promoting its work.⁸ Old cowhands, business and professional men and women, school children, and civic clubs joined enthusiastically in the enterprise and within a few short years a vast amount of work had been done.

By 1928 the Society began to take definite shape. Its machinery was running smoothly and its policies were fairly well determined. It has acquired a sizeable collection of historical records and scientific data. Permanent headquarters were established at the West Texas State College at Canyon where the annual meetings of the Society are held. The annual banquet held in connection with the annual meeting was already recognized as a red letter day in the program of the Society. These meetings focused the attention and developed the interests of a widely scattered group of early pioneers and business and professional men and women. Acquisitions increased rapidly and in 1924 the Society received its first gift of property. On June 27, 1924, a celebration was held on the site of the Adobe Walls in Hutchinson County commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of the Adobe Walls. A marble shaft bearing the names of those who took part in the battle was erected on the site. Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Coble, owners of the Turkey Track Ranch on which the site is located, deeded five acres of land to the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society in order to preserve permanently the historic spot.

In 1925 J. Evetts Haley, then a fresh graduate from college, was employed as field representative for the Society. Haley, full of energy and enthusiasm for the cause he represented, carried the message of the Society to the homes of the people of the

⁸ The list of those present at the annual business meeting of the Society in 1926 shows that about fifty percent of those in attendance were old timers. The list contained such names as O. H. Nelson, T. D. Hobart, Judge and Mrs. L. Gough, Mrs. Billy Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. John Knight, S. K. Bynum, Horace M. Russell, Mrs. W. W. Wetsel, H. F. Mitchell, R. P. Smythe, D. H. Arnold, John Arnot, and Ed Baird.

plains region in a stripped-down Model T Ford. He found a ready response to his appeal and within a short time he had collected a vast amount of historical data in the form of interviews with pioneer settlers, written records, letters, photographs, and artifacts of both the modern Indian and the pioneer white settlers. In his report to the Society at the annual meeting in 1928, Haley, after reviewing the progress of the Society for the past seven years, observed that, "The field is as rich as it is broad. The foundation is laid. I trust the superstructure we raise will be commensurate with the possibilities."

The years following 1928 were critical years in the development of the program of the Society. Recent acquisitions emphasized the need of some means of housing these materials as well as providing facilities for their proper display. Moreover, the program of the Society was being projected into new fields and the possibilities seemed to be almost unlimited. In fact the Society had reached the stage in its development where its program either had to be expanded or restricted to very limited fields.

In 1927 T. D. Hobart was elected president of the Society and he was continued in office for six years. At the end of his administration he was elected an honorary member of the Board of Directors for life. Hobart took up the duties of his office with his usual caution and confidence. He mapped out a long range program for the Society and in nominating him for reelection to his second term his associates declared that, "The Society cannot afford to dispense with his valuable services at this time."

The major project of the Hobart administration was the building of a museum in which to house the rapidly growing collection of historical records and scientific data in possession of the Society. Hobart's colleagues and the friends and patrons of the Society gave their whole-hearted support to the enterprise. In the early part of 1929 a campaign was started to raise

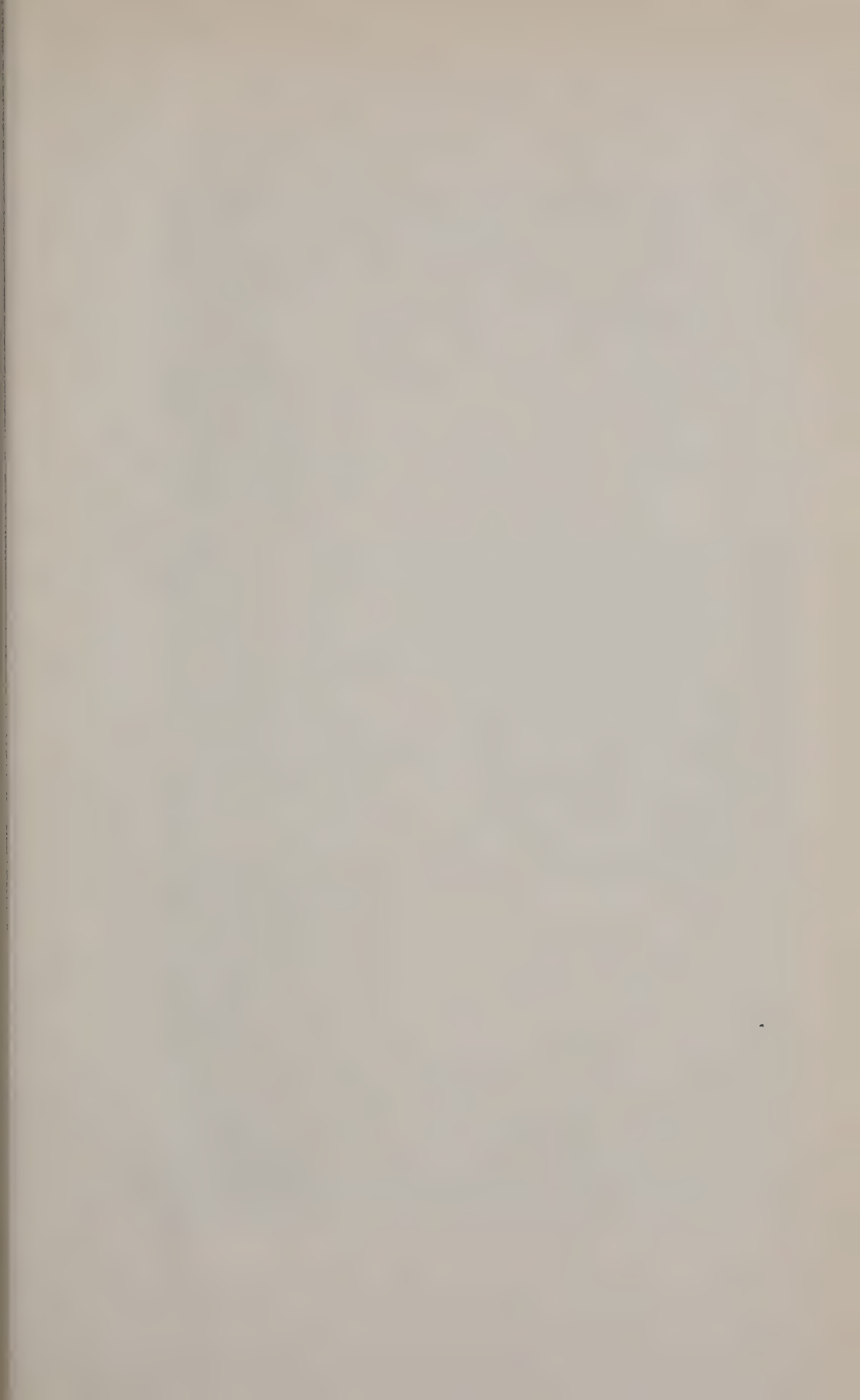
\$75,000.00 by private subscription with which to build a museum. The campaign met with an unusually favorable response until the crash on the New York Stock Exchange in November of that year. This crash was followed soon afterwards by an intensive drouth in the Great Plains area. These conditions put an end to all benevolent enterprises and the museum movement was faced with its greatest crisis.

When this impasse was reached a bill was engineered through the state legislature in 1931 which provided for an appropriation of \$25,000.00 for a museum building on the campus of the West Texas State College. The bill also contained a provision that an equal sum of money should be paid by the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society. The bill attracted state wide attention, and scores of people appealed to Governor Ross Sterling to let the appropriation stand.

As a result of the passage of this bill the people of West Texas were forced to raise some \$12,000.00 to match the state appropriation during the worst period of drouth and depression the country had ever experienced. However, the undaunted courage of the West Texans was not to be denied. Scores of people gave freely of their hard-earned money and their services. Hundreds of school children and college students donated money and materials to this project and in August, 1932, the money was deposited with the State Treasurer. On September 1, 1932, the first unit of the first state museum in Texas was begun. The building was completed and opened to the public on April 14, 1933.

At an elaborate ceremony on November 5, 1932, the corner stone of the museum was laid by the A. F. and A. M. Grand Lodge of Texas, with T. D. Hobart as Grand Master of Ceremonies.⁴ Several hundred people from all parts of the Texas

⁴ W. H. Patrick of Clarendon was Deputy Grand Master of ceremonies; Sam Isaacs of Canadian was Grand Senior Warden; Colonel R. P. Smythe of Plainview was Grand Junior Warden; George Stapleton of Amarillo was Grand Treasurer, and Oscar Gano of Canyon was Grand Marshall.





T. D. Hobart at Dedication of Museum at Canyon, April 14, 1933

Panhandle were present for the occasion. The principal address of the occasion was given by the Honorable J. O. Guleke of Amarillo, who declared that, "The cultural advancement of our people has been the greatest achievement in these forty years of plenty. . . . When we preserve the early traditions of the people of the Panhandle and extol the virtue of rugged honesty for its priceless worth, we shall have profited and succeeded in greater abundance than had we discovered mountains of gold."

The completion of Pioneer Hall proved to be the crowning work of T. D. Hobart's busy life. During his lifetime he had witnessed many changes in West Texas and the Southwest. Within a half century Hobart and his contemporaries had laid the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon culture in the plains of West Texas, and during his maturer years Hobart had recognized the need of preserving the best elements of that culture for posterity. As he turned the key that officially opened the doors of the museum to the hundreds of people waiting at the entrance he remarked that, "This is one of the happiest days of my life. It is the realization of a dream that I have had for years." The museum was received with wide popular acclaim and it has grown in popularity and prestige with each succeeding year as is evidenced by the thousands of people who have visited and inspected its displays.⁵

The completion of Pioneer Hall gave an element of permanence to the work of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society; it opened up greater possibilities, and it created greater confidence among the patrons of the Society and the public generally. Hobart's retirement as president of the Society did not lessen his enthusiasm or his activity. He joined with his contemporaries to push with renewed vigor the program of both the Society and the museum. The pioneers continued their

⁵ The records show that from thirty to forty thousand people register at the museum annually. The total registration during the period from 1933 to 1949 is approaching the million mark.

leadership in the enterprise. The records show that from 1921 to 1945 every president of the Society was selected from among the leading pioneer business men who also constituted a majority of its Board of Directors.⁶ Each successive president of the Society gave his best efforts to the enterprise and, as a result, the Society and the museum collection grew rapidly.

In 1938 Judge James D. Hamlin of Farwell was elected president of the Society and was continued in office for seven years. Hamlin's half century of connection with the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company and the famous XIT Ranch of Texas, together with his versatility and his scholarly attainments, gave him a wide and favorable acquaintance over the entire Southwest. He was, therefore, instrumental in securing several large collections for the Society and the museum, and during his administration the scope of the work of the museum was enlarged and expanded. Through his efforts the complete records and letter files of the XIT Ranch were added to the Society's collection of records. This is perhaps the largest and the most complete set of ranch records in existence. Soon afterwards the Susan Janney Allen Collection of Indian baskets, pottery, dress, weapons, utensils, blankets, trinkets, adornments, and publications relating to the Indians of the Southwest came into possession of the Society. This large and valuable collection was made by Miss Allen after years of travel and study in the Southwest.⁷

In 1942 this collection was supplemented by the Floyd V. Studer Collection of Indian artifacts. The collection consists largely of archaeological and mineral specimens, and it portrays much of the prehistoric life in the Panhandle-Plains region. Among the artifacts in this collection are the remains of the

⁶ During the above period the following men served as presidents of the Society: Judge Thomas F. Turner, 1921-1926; O. H. Nelson, 1926-1927; T. D. Hobart, 1927-1933; H. E. Hoover, 1933-1935; W. H. Patrick, 1935-1937; Horace M. Russell and R. P. Smythe, 1937-1938; James D. Hamlin, 1938-1945.

⁷ Miss Allen now resides at Milford, Delaware.

dwelling places, burials, and the tools and weapons of these prehistoric people. "Artifacts and other remains commonly found at the ruins are hearths, fetishes, ornaments, burials, mortar, large arrowheads, lances, spears, knives, scrapers, bone awls, pottery, flint awls, pipes, hammerstones, baskets, metates, and manos".⁸

In 1942 Judge Hamlin conveyed title of his own large collection to the Society and the museum. This fine collection of art and antiques represents some forty years of patient effort on the part of Judge Hamlin at a cost of thousands of dollars. "I have donated this collection to the museum because I want the youth of these windswept plains of Texas to have a greater appreciation of art and cultural values," said Hamlin.

In 1943 the O. T. Nicholson Gun Collection was willed to the museum. Mr. Nicholson, a banker of Shamrock, Texas, spent almost a half century in the collection of these guns, and has spent thousands of dollars and years of study in tracing the authentic history of each individual gun. Few persons have a more thorough and detailed knowledge of guns than Nicholson. He has specialized in the evolution of the six-shooter and other guns of the Southwest. This collection represents a cumulative history of the gun lore of the West.

With the aid of several projects, approved in the 1930's by the Works Progress Administration, the Society has acquired a large and valuable collection of paleontological specimens which reveal much of the prehistoric life of the plains region.

During the past twenty-eight years the Society has also accumulated a library of written records of no mean value. These records consist of newspaper files, personal interviews with hundreds of pioneer plains men and women, personal letter files, photographs of early day scenes, and many other similar records. In conclusion it may be said that more than one

⁸ Floyd V. Studer, "Discovering The Panhandle," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review*, IV, p. 18.

thousand individuals have made gifts or loans, large and small, to the museum since 1921.

All of these collections furnish the layman with a means of entertainment and instruction, they afford a laboratory for the study of first hand materials for high school and college students, and they supply valuable materials for historical and scientific students of research. The Panhandle-Plains Historical Society and the museum with their large collection of materials have done much in recent years to develop an interest in and an appreciation of things historical and cultural in the Texas Panhandle and the Southwest.

In 1933 the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, through its Board of Directors, entered into an agreement with the State of Texas. Under the terms of this agreement the museum building was donated to the state, while the State agreed to provide funds for the maintenance of the museum. Since that time the state legislature has appropriated some \$70,000.00 for this purpose. In addition to this the state in 1936 allocated, through the Texas Centennial Commission, \$25,000.00 which was used in enlarging the physical plant. The federal government also provided several thousand dollars worth of building material for this purpose. Moreover, during the past twenty-eight years of the life of the Society thousands of dollars and much building material have been donated by private individuals and corporations. Donations have been made by hundreds of people of all ages and stations in life. Indeed the Panhandle-Plains Museum has been rightly designated as "the peoples' museum."

These allocations and appropriations are a good indication of the growing favor the museum has received in recent years. It has come to be recognized as one of the leading institutions of its kind in the Southwest. The museum is a member of the National Association of Museums, and its materials are of equal rank and importance, for the area it serves, with the older

and larger museums of the country. It will be the repository for the historical records, the scientific data, and other cultural remains of the people of the plains region of the Southwest for ages to come.

The Panhandle-Plains Museum is the handiwork of many people, and it is a work of art within itself. It is built of Cordova stone and is the Greek type of architecture. The decorations on the building are appropriate to the plains. The facade is adorned with about eighty brands of the early ranches in Northwest Texas which are studded with the head of a longhorn steer artistically entwined about the brands with a lariat. Over the left entrance to the building is carved the likeness of a typical frontiersman, while over the right column is a plains Indian. Above each figure is the American eagle. The whole front of the building is decorated with the carved heads of animals native to the plains, and with scenes, carved in stone, depicting life on the plains in the early days. The cactus, so common to the plains area, forms an artistic frieze around the top of the building.

The museum is distinctive in that it was built largely by private contributions of the people of the plains, and it is dedicated to the pioneers of the plains. The museum preserves the remains of cultures that were distinctive because they are *plains* cultures. It synthesizes and symbolizes in artistic beauty the thousands of records and artifacts within its walls which went into the building of a culture by the forefathers of the plains. This, together with the rich repository of historical and scientific materials, makes the Panhandle-Plains Museum the shrine and the Mecca of all plains people.

The Panhandle-Plains Museum is the result of years of planning and hard work on the part of scores of plainsmen and plainswomen who were determined to preserve the cultural remains of the plains for posterity. During all the formative stages of this work Timothy Dwight Hobart took an active

part for more than a quarter of a century. He lived and worked with plains people for fifty years and this molded him into a thorough plainsman. His work with the corporations he represented during this period carried him all over the Southwest, to distant parts of the nation, and to the British Isles. Wherever he went he exemplified in the highest degree the friendly, straightforward spirit of the plains. When he came to the end of the journey Fred Hobart wrote the following fitting epitaph for the headstone of his grave at Pampa, Texas, a town Hobart helped to establish in 1902:

T. D. HOBART

*A pioneer, loved and respected by all who knew him;
with a character strong and rugged as the hills of
Vermont from whence he came, and a vision
as broad as the Texas prairies.*

PAMPA'S FIRST CITIZEN

WHEN TIMOTHY DWIGHT HOBART reached the full stature of manhood he stood more than six feet in height. His large, well-proportioned frame, his dignified bearing, and his genial personality gave to him a distinctiveness that few men have. He was kindly in disposition, and cordial and engaging in conversation. His penetrating brown eyes reflected much strength of character, and the constant twinkle in his eye betokened a keenness of wit and humor which was excelled only by the vast storehouse of information and knowledge he had acquired through years of practical experience and study. In conversation his voice was mild and he was even tempered in disposition. He always punctuated his conversation and his writing with sparkling bits of humor. He had a wealth of western stories which he frequently used to good advantage in relieving tense situations, especially in important business transactions. He was a man of few words but always expressed himself clearly and effectively. His sincerity and his sympathetic understanding and tolerance of others commanded the admiration and respect of all those with whom he came in contact. He was the epitome of poise and self-composure and never became excited either in his conversation or in his work.

Hobart lived in an age of rapid transition in Texas. He came to Texas in the days of the horse and buggy and of oil lamps; in the period of the open range and free grass; in the days of wood fire and hand labor; at a time when roads were only trails; when travellers dragged over the boggy prairies and through the shifting sands; when dirt paths and board walks served as sidewalks, and when village streets were paved only with mother earth and good intentions; when cattle, cowboys, coyotes, prairie dogs and rattlesnakes roamed and ruled the prairies of West Texas.

Hobart helped to transform West Texas from an uncharted wilderness into a land of ranches, stock farms, and thriving villages. He ran thousands of miles of survey lines, supervised the construction of hundreds of miles of wire fence, cut lands into ranches and large pastures, and later helped to parcel out millions of its acres among ranchers and stock farmers during one of the last migrations of Anglo-Americans into the frontiers of the Old West: lands which for more than a century had absorbed by successive stages some of the most aggressive elements of the older settled regions of the East. In one short generation Hobart witnessed the coming of railroads to West Texas, the introduction of windmills and barbed wire, the telephone and the telegraph, the automobile and the steam tractor, airplanes, the development of stock raising and agriculture from their origins, and the discovery of one of Texas' greatest oil and gas fields: an era of economic development unprecedented in the history of the Southwest.

West Texas, a virgin frontier in the latter nineteenth century, had its half a million people by the end of the first World War, and it was producing much of the wealth of the Lone Star State. Yet this region has retained its frontier institutions and much of its frontier character. Many of the children and grandchildren of Hobart's generation still live on ranches in West Texas, remnants of ranches of the Old West. They still crawl from the cradle into the saddle to be trained in the business of producing much of the nation's choicest beef, and at the same time to maintain many of the traditions and much of the technique of one of the state's oldest and most productive enterprises. Other descendants of Hobart's generation man the tractors which stir the soils of West Texas to produce a vast amount of the state's cotton, wheat, and other small grain crops, as well as hogs, sheep, horses, and cattle. Still others have inherited lands which produce much of the liquid gold of the state and which hold vast quantities of the nation's gas supply. Yet West

Texas wealth, West Texas institutions, and West Texas culture, whose foundations were laid by frontiersmen who belonged to the Old West, are still in their initial stages of development.

Hobart and his generation, therefore, occupy a peculiar and distinct place in the history of West Texas. They form a sort of connecting link between what might be termed the ancient and the more modern period in the history of the region. Theirs was the age that witnessed the transition from the horse and buggy days to the machine age with all of the accompanying changes.

Hobart was typical and representative of the best of his generation in almost every phase of its development. More particularly in the economic development his life and work typified what corporate wealth and free enterprise could do with the unsettled lands and their resources under the old capitalistic system. Hobart worked for and represented some of the oldest and largest corporations in the Southwest. Yet he occupied a position with reference to these corporations much similar to that of the proprietors of the London and Plymouth companies of the seventeenth century: he used the corporations as a means to an end—settlement. Hobart's whole philosophy, political, social, religious, and economic was grounded on the capitalistic system under which the nation had developed since its inception. Any correct interpretation or evaluation, therefore, of the life and times of T. D. Hobart and his generation must be viewed from the standpoint of the capitalistic system.

Hobart was a close student of state and national affairs. He read widely and corresponded with congressmen, bankers, cowmen, and business men in his latter years in an effort to find the correct political and economic trends of his time. He realized that World War I had changed the whole pattern of political and economic life of the nation and he sought to analyze the effects of these changes on the national policies. As early as 1920 he wrote, "I have had a hunch for a long time

that it would be little short of a miracle if we do not have a serious financial crash and between you and me I have been laying my plans with that in view and planning to stay near the 'shore' for the present." And again in 1924 he declared that, "Somehow I just feel as though we were nearing a crisis, that we are either going to get partially back to the same government, or that we will go more and more to the other extreme".¹ By 1932 he wondered "what is coming next in the financial situation of our country and the world." He was alarmed at the rapidly increasing taxes and the multiplication of governmental expenditures in the early 1930's, and he was anxious to see national economic affairs stabilized again. He favored national improvements of any kind when he felt the nation could afford them, but he was strongly opposed to the "reckless manner in which bonds were voted at the expense of property owners." In the building of both state and national highways he believed that the people who use the roads should pay for them by means of a gasoline tax. "With farm and ranch products the lowest they have been for years," he did not think that road bonds should add another burden to the taxpayers. His advice to the people was "to pause and look, before we leap." Otherwise he feared that this was going to be a tax-ridden country if the tax trends of the 1930's were continued. He declared that the year 1934 was the greatest period of uncertainty he had witnessed in his fifty-one years in Texas. Many people, he said, had money but they did not know what to do with it because of the uncertainty of things.

Hobart was skeptical of the "Brain Trust" of President Roosevelt. He thought that the best all around man to seek advice from was the man with a liberal education, and some practical experience with it. "If I had to choose between the two, I would take the practical man," he wrote. He quoted

¹ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Ferrand Warren, Berlin, Vermont, April 17, 1920; and February 25, 1924.

approvingly from a friend who wrote him that if the President would secure a half dozen shrewd Missouri mule traders and have them sit on the White House lawn, and if after he was through interviewing the Brain Trust, he would go out and get the reaction of the mule traders he might get somewhere. "I must admit," Hobart wrote, "that they are shooting over my head when it comes to destroying millions of acres of cotton, some of which the Government had already financed to plant. . . . I have been voting with the Democrats or so-called Democrats for the most part for years. . . . but the party was consistently opposed to paternalism. . . . I fear that we are drifting far from the Moorings of our Fathers. . . . The sooner we learn to rely upon ourselves and not depend on Congress and the legislature to pull us out of a hole, the better it will be. . . . Just where we are going I do not know, I have been trying to find someone who does know but so far, without success."

Hobart was no less interested in international policy. He was not an isolationist but rather a non-interventionist. He believed that the main business of a state was to keep its own house in order, and he was strongly opposed to the intervention of one state in the affairs of another. He was somewhat apprehensive of Russia and her communist system, and of the influence that Russia might have on American governmental affairs. He advocated a "hands off" policy in dealing with Russia and likewise proposed that the United States should in no way interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Republic. "I note what you say about the recognition of Russia," he wrote, "and I fully agree with you that we do not need any outside assistance in the way of undermining our government, as we seem to be experts at that ourselves. . . . I take it that it is no concern of ours the form of government the Russian people choose to have so long as they do not interfere with us. The fact that a former Russian government was largely indebted to us and which the present Russian government refuses to recognize perhaps is no

worse than some other nations who refuse to pay us what they owe us. If it is a fact that the present Russian government sponsors a continuous stream of propaganda, the object of which is to undermine and destroy our government, then I, for one, protest against the recognition of Russia. Why sell our birthright for a mess of pottage?"²

If Hobart ever had a political idol, it was Winston Churchill. He read after Churchill and followed closely his political career as long as he lived. He occasionally wrote the British statesman and when he was in England he sought him out in the British Parliament. On August 4, 1931, Hobart addressed the following note to Churchill: "You will not doubt be surprised to receive a note from me, but I wanted to tell you how much I have enjoyed your articles in *Colliers*. I never had the pleasure of meeting you, but did have the pleasure of having you pointed out to me some twenty-seven years ago in the House of Commons by my friend, Sir Robert Williams. You are doubtless also acquainted with my friend, Sir Charles Stuart." Hobart's trips to England in connection with the White Deer lands and the JA properties brought him in contact with many prominent Englishmen, both in public and in private life, and this no doubt exerted much influence on his views on international policy, but the views and policies of Churchill better than those of any other statesman seemed to coincide with those of Hobart.

In his national political affiliation Hobart was a Republican, but he often voted the democratic ticket locally. He realized the impotency of the Republican party in Texas and, therefore, he worked with and through the party in control. "The Republican organization in Texas," he wrote Coke, "has always impressed me as being very much like the democratic organization in Vermont in my day and time. A little bunch held together

² T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Senator J. W. Wadsworth, Jr., Geneseo, New York, November 10, 1933; T. D. Hobart to *The Dallas Morning News*, October 24, 1933.

so as not to have too many to divide amongst when there was something to pass around." Hobart believed that the election of President McKinley in 1896 meant a return of "sound money and good government." As a result of the election he was jubilant over the fact that he was wearing a fine hat at the expense of his democratic friends. His erstwhile friend, Phil G. Omohundro, wrote him a letter addressing him as the friend of Mark Hanna and Bill McKinley and congratulated him on the results of the national election. Omohundro added: "The good times promised by you Repubs. have not as yet touched the pulse of this town. By Jacks, I dont care much who is President if a fellow can make a little money. . . . If McK will do anything even kick up a war with Spain, damned if I wont turn Republican and have as blue a streak around my abdominal parts as you have".⁸ Hobart was firm in his political principles, jocular with his democratic friends during national elections, but was never aggressive or offensive in his political views.

In times of international crisis Hobart was strictly nonpartisan. He put the welfare of his country above all partisan politics. He had a great deal of national pride and unlimited faith in the principles of democratic government. He got deep satisfaction out of having a son who took an active part overseas in World War I because he believed that this was was a righteous struggle for the cause of humanity. He was intensely patriotic. He wrote his son Fred that he had often wanted to serve his country if a crisis ever arose, "but I guess I will have to pass the active part up to you. . . . Remember you are to be privileged to have a part in the most Righteous war that any nation ever waged in the name of humanity and we hope and pray that it will be carried on until Prussian Autocracy is swept from the face of the earth. Remember also that you are working for the general good of our glorious country as well as for humanity

⁸ Phil G. Omohundro, El Reno, Oklahoma, to T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, November 20, 1896.

everywhere. . . ." "We have got to win the war," he wrote his brother-in-law, Ferrand Warren, "no matter if it takes the last dollar and the last man that is my ticket, and we must expect to put up with lots of inconvenience. We have not gone into it for gain and we will come out of it a grander nation. We shall spell 'nation' with a bigger 'N' than ever. We will all be Americans and all who are not of that brand will have to get out".⁴

He believed that all aliens in this country who were attempting to undermine the democratic system should be exiled to their home country, but he was in no way in sympathy with Klan activities. "I realize that many good men have gone into the Klan," he wrote, "but how they can remain in it when they see what it leads to is beyond me. If you people could see what I have seen, how it divides communities, churches, even families I think they would stay out".⁵

Hobart believed in a certain amount of national preparedness. He thought the best way to keep the nations at peace was to be, "reasonably prepared for any emergency. We have to meet conditions as they are and not as we would like to have them. We have always muddled through some way but at great expense of life and property," he declared.⁶

Hobart's interest in national and international affairs did not dampen his ardor and enthusiasm for the affairs of his adopted state. His half century of active life and achievement in Texas and the potentialities which his fertile mind envisioned for the state made him a great enthusiast for Texas. He grew up with West Texas in its youthful period of development, and he came to have an abiding faith in and love for its soil, its people, and its culture. His deep attachment for Texas is well illustrated in a story that he delighted to tell. A minister who was conduct-

⁴ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Ferrand Warren, Berlin, Vermont, December 18, 1917.

⁵ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to Reverend Donald Fraser, Rochester, New Hampshire, November 9, 1923.

⁶ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to James Monahan, Director of Public Relations, New York City, May 29, 1934.

ing a revival meeting invited all who wanted to go to heaven to stand. All arose to their feet except one man. The minister then asked all who wanted to go to hell to rise to their feet. No one stood up. The minister then addressed the man who had remained seated and said: "My friend, where do you want to go?" "I don't want to go anywhere," the man replied, "I want to stay in Texas."

Hobart's primary interests were quite naturally in lands and economic development. Having seen West Texas develop largely as a result of the introduction of outside capital he favored the modification or repeal of all legislation that had a tendency to discourage the investment of foreign capital. He used his influence to secure the repeal of the Robertson Insurance Law so that major insurance companies would return to the state. He was strongly in favor of the passage of the Texas House Bill no. 719 validating the excess in the original surveys of lands because "it was important to large landholders and affected thousands of small holders." Much of this land had been surveyed and disposed of to settlers by Hobart through the New York and Texas Land Company and the White Deer Lands. Moreover, thousands of other settlers had acquired their lands under similar circumstances. Hobart believed that it was the duty of the state to make landholders secure in their title to excess lands which they had purchased and developed in good faith. He also contended that Texas ranchers and farmers should be given economic relief by the introduction of a moderate sales tax equitably adjusted. "But," he said, "if it is a means of collecting additional revenue for tax eaters I am absolutely opposed to it."

Hobart's interests extended to every phase of economic development in Texas—ranching, stock farming, oil, irrigation, forestry, and reclamation of lands. His interest in forestry dated back to his boyhood days in the Vermont hills. In 1925 he wrote the Commission of Forestry at Montpelier, Vermont: "I

am greatly interested in the Forestry News you are sending out. In the last issue you ask a question if any other forest planter has tried pruning trees. On my old home place in Berlin, Vermont, on the hill east of my old homestead, my father, when a small boy, discovered one small white pine. By the time I had reached manhood this had become a large tree and a thicket of small pines had sprung up in the immediate neighborhood as a result of the scattering of burs from the one tree mentioned. In the spring of 1882, a few months before I left Vermont, I went into this thicket of pines and thinned it out to some extent and trimmed off the lower branches. I should say these trees were then anywhere from one inch or less, to two and one-half inches in diameter. It might interest you to visit that timber now."

Tree planting developed into a hobby with Hobart. He planted more than fifty thousand trees on his Washita Ranch in the Texas Panhandle and more than a hundred thousand on the Hobart and Warren farms in Vermont. For years he kept his membership in the American Forestry Association and studied all the literature he could find on the subject. He pioneered in getting forestry work started in Texas and led in this work in Vermont. He was instrumental in getting the Texas legislature to appropriate \$10,000.00 for forestry work in Texas in 1915. One of his greatest delights was to experiment in soils with growing trees. Landscaping and trees played an important role in the colonization of the White Deer Lands.

The rapid development in Texas and the accompanying institutional changes, plus a study of state and national history, made Hobart historically minded. He became conscious of the importance of the traditions and history, not only of Texas and the Southwest, but also of his native state of Vermont. He came to realize the fruition of the efforts of his generation from a cultural standpoint. In the latter years of his life, therefore, he devoted much time to investigation and research in the early

period of settlement of West Texas. He sought for the facts relating to early exploring expeditions, Indian campaigns, buffalo hunting, trail making, county organization, etc. He spent much time also in locating the sites of historic spots and marking them with suitable markers. He collected and recorded brief reminiscences of many early pioneers and left these among his voluminous letter files. He wrote several articles dealing with the early history of West Texas and also a few articles relating to the earlier history of his native state.

Hobart was a close personal friend of many early Panhandle scouts and pioneers. He regarded these friendships as some of the richest of his intangible possessions. "I came to the Panhandle forty-six years ago last September," he wrote J. Wright Mooar of Snyder, Texas, in 1933, "I knew Billy Dixon, Ed Fletcher, J. W. McKinley, Johnnie Long and many other old timers." Hobart became an intimate friend of Ed Fletcher who scouted with General Miles as a teamster in the early 1870's, and who later became a buffalo hunter, and finally settled near Hobart's Washita Ranch. Fletcher knew much of the lore of the Texas Panhandle, which he imparted to Hobart, and their mutual understanding of its cultural value knitted more closely the ties of a lasting friendship. On the day before his death Fletcher presented to Hobart one of his most prized possessions—his old buffalo gun.⁷ This was the last link in the chain of events that cemented a friendship eternal between the souls of these two men. Only T. D. Hobart and Ed Fletcher could understand the historical and spiritual value of this old weapon which had slain thousands of bison on the southwestern plains in preparation for the coming of Hobart's generation and their Anglo-Saxon posterity. Hobart buried Ed Fletcher in the cemetery at Canadian, Texas, and wrote the following epitaph on

⁷ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to J. Wright Mooar, Snyder, Texas, February 13, 1933. This gun is today one of the most prized possessions in the Hobart Gun Collection.

the headstone of his grave for coming generations to read and reflect upon:

E. H. Fletcher, Augusta, Maine, 1846.

With 5th Battery, 1st Battalion Maine
Light Artillery in the Civil War.

With General Miles in his Expedition
against the Indians in the Panhandle in 1874.

Ranchman Since 1875 on the Washita.

A Valiant Citizen and True Friend.

The relationship between Hobart and Fletcher is typical of his friendship with scores of the first white settlers in the Texas Panhandle; friendships that mellowed with age and were tempered by the growing mutual understanding of these pioneers of the historical and spiritual values of the traditions of the Old West that were so rapidly passing into oblivion. These traditions Hobart was anxious to preserve for posterity. He, therefore, maintained active membership in several historical associations which were devoted to historical objectives. For years he took an active part in the Texas branch of the Sons of the American Revolution. He was also an active member of the State Historical Society of Vermont for a number of years. He helped to organize the Panhandle Old Settlers Association, and was a member of the committee that wrote the constitution and by-laws of that organization, and later served as its president. He was one of the moving spirits in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society almost from the time that it was first organized. He served for many years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, and was president of the Society from 1928 to 1934. He was the leader and adviser of the Board of Directors in securing funds for the building of the first unit of the museum of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society from 1928 to 1932.

Hobart's interests and activities were as varied as were the needs of his community. People in many walks of life, from

piano tuners to property owners, sought his counsel and advice. He never appeared to be too busy to give some attention to the whims and needs of all of them. Hobart was a builder of foundational institutions, and as such he solicited the support of every group and vocation in the community. He ran the survey lines in locating the townsite of Pampa in 1902, and gave encouragement to the establishment of every kind of necessary business enterprise. He helped organize the first bank in Pampa in 1904 at a time when banks were almost nil in the Texas Panhandle, and he served either as a director or president of a bank from 1904 until his death in 1935. He was drafted to serve as mayor of Pampa in 1927 during a critical period in the development of the town and community. He was always behind every worthy civic and community enterprise with both his money and his influence. The thriving city of Pampa stands today as a living monument to the visions and industry of Hobart and his contemporaries. This city is symbolic of the progress that has been made, almost in one generation, in transforming the prairies of West Texas from an open wilderness into a land of thriving towns, stock farms, and industries.

The work of Hobart and his contemporaries is also suggestive in many ways of the earliest days of colonization in Texas. Just as Stephen F. Austin formed a connecting link between the Anglo-American settlers and the Mexican government during the critical days of colonization and settlement in East Texas, so did Hobart, typical and representative of many corporation managers, work faithfully through the years as intermediary between the corporate interests and the settlers in the colonization and settlement of West Texas. Like Stephen F. Austin and his contemporary empresarios, Hobart and his contemporary corporation managers answered thousands of inquiries about West Texas lands, schools, churches, stock raising, farming, etc. They distributed lands, made improvements, extended credit, and in short made it possible for thousands of

people to establish homes in West Texas who could not have come without the help and encouragement given by corporations through their managers.

A man's real measure can perhaps best be taken when gauged in terms of his home life and environment. Hobart was a family man. His highest and most cherished ambitions were constantly projected out to and through his family. It was in his family life that his tenderest and most sacred affections were manifested. The niceties of family proprieties were never expressed in a gushing manner, but with reserve and dignity characteristic of his solid sincerity. Never did he go on an extended trip without bringing to each member of his family some useful and appropriate gift on his return. While he was himself an adept in the selection of gifts ranging from dolls to good books, yet there was always a consultation with his helpmate on this subject before leaving, which was often supplemented with letters later. Sundays in the Hobart home were set aside as days of worship, and the Christmas season was also a period of worship as well as family rejoicing. These more refined influences extended from the home into the community. To Hobart a church or a school were not complete without a bell and he saw to it that his community had both. By no means the least factor in the selection of these bells were their tonal qualities. To Hobart the rhythmic peal of the church and school bells filled the air with a solemnity and a sanctity that were essential to the spiritual needs of the community. In this sense he never got away from the influence of the old puritanic ideas of his childhood days.

While Hobart found his happiest and most sacred relations in his family life, at the same time he suffered the greatest disappointment of his life in the loss of his son Warren in 1910. For months his spirit was completely crushed and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he could carry on. "We have been so completely upset by the loss of Warren," he wrote,



The Hobart Ranch Home on the Washita

"that I have hardly felt like taking up any business matters: in fact it seems like we could hardly go ahead with any of our plans, but I suppose that is not the right view to take of matters. We had kept the ranch more on Warren's account than anything else as he loved it more than any other spot on earth. What we shall do about it now I do not know." The manifold duties of everyday affairs soon crowded in and helped to alleviate to some extent his great sorrow.

In 1887 Hobart filed on a section of land located at the head of the Washita River. To this he later added other lands and developed it into one of the most ideal ranches in the Texas Panhandle. Located in the southern part of Hemphill County, in a rolling prairie country, the clear waters of the Washita meander over a sandy stream bed ranging from a few yards to several hundred yards in width. Clumps of hackberry, cottonwoods, and elm trees skirt the edges of the dry sand bed of the river to make it an ideal range for the fine Hereford stock that graze along its wide valley and on the adjoining uplands. The rolling hills, covered with sagebrush; buffalo and mesquite grasses, reflect their tinted hues to blend perfectly with the blue horizon of an Indian summer day with their background of rising clouds of smoke from the busy carbon black plants in the distance, symbolic of the Indian signal smokes of earlier days. Here, where the Washita makes almost a semi-circle, are located the headquarters of the Hobart Ranch. The whole surroundings reflect perfect quiet and contentment which Hobart loved so much, and which he planned to enjoy with his family in his declining years. But such enjoyment and pleasure never come to a man whose life and activity are so full of achievement as were Hobart's, except in the realms of dreams and happy anticipations. In fact men of Hobart's stamp could never adjust themselves to a life of inactivity. Hobart was "ever pursuing and ever achieving" and he, therefore, never lived in his Washita Ranch except for short periods of time. He was always busy

colonizing the White Deer lands, managing the JA properties, laying out and developing townsites, and devising plans for the development of the resources of the western ranges of the Lone Star State.

One of Hobart's major concerns for his town and community was the improvement of its moral and religious atmosphere. He was deeply religious, but was thoroughly practical and tolerant in his religious views. He was an active church member practically all of his life. Since there was no organized Congregational Church in Texas, he united with the Presbyterian Church soon after he arrived in Palestine and remained a staunch supporter of that church as long as he lived. However, he never forgot the church of his childhood days which was founded by his great grandfather. The Congregational Church which was dedicated at Berlin, Vermont, in 1803 by the Reverend James Hobart burned in 1837⁸ and a new church was built at what was known as the Berlin Corner. In 1923, on the 125th anniversary of the organization of the Berlin Church by his great grandfather, Hobart and his brother-in-law, Ferland Warren, erected a granite shaft on the old site of the original church made of "dark Barre granite" with a bronze plate which contains the following inscription: "On this site was erected the First Congregational Church of Berlin, Vermont, 1803. Rev. James Hobart, Pastor." The land on which the old church was located was deeded to the Congregational Church at Berlin. Hobart also collected as many of the relics of the old church as he could find, including the Silver Communion Set which was used during the days of his great grandfather's ministry.

When Hobart and his young bride came to Mobeetie there was no organized church of any denomination. They, therefore, attended *community* services whenever and wherever they

⁸ T. D. Hobart, Pampa, Texas, to W. O. Parmenter, Northhampton, Mass., June 18, 1923; T. D. Hobart to H. H. Howe, Northfield, Vermont, May 29, 1923; T. D. Hobart to E. M. Harvey, Montpelier, Vermont, May 24, 1924.

had opportunity to do so. There were no strictly denominational lines on the frontier before the days of organized churches. Therefore, the people of these frontier communities united in a common effort to improve the moral and religious atmosphere. In the days of pioneering in West Texas, therefore, church organizations had to be effected and churches had to be built along with other institutions. Hobart entered into the work of church building with the same optimism and enthusiasm that characterized his work in other lines of development. His repertoire of western stories extended into the realm of religious undertakings in West Texas, and he often included such stories in promoting building enterprises as well as in the entertainment of his friends. Typical of such stories is one he often related about a Catholic priest who was building a Catholic church at Quanah, Texas, in the early days and one of his parishioners was Mike Carrigan. "Mike," said the priest, "we have to build a Catholic church here and I shall expect \$500 from you." Mike replied, "Father, how do you expect me to raise \$500?" To which the priest replied, "Mike, you are one of the best fixed Catholics in this community, and I must have \$500 from you." Mike then replied, "Father, I'll give you \$250 and if that don't suit you I will join the Methodists and go to hell."

One of the strongest traits of Hobart's character was his faithful fidelity to every public trust that was imposed upon him. He was fair and honest in his dealings with the companies he represented and with his clients. Hobart could have added thousands of dollars to his private fortune had he submitted to the questionable tactics and grasping land agents and exploited the colonizers of the White Deer lands. Moreover, he withstood storms of criticism and the avalanche of hordes of scheming speculators in his determined effort to carry out to the letter the will of Mrs. Cornelia Adair as the independent executor of her estate. Hobart's letter files contain scores of letters from

settlers on the White Deer lands extolling his virtues of honesty and fair dealing. Typical of such letters is one from a client who wrote him in 1932: "I have not seen you for twenty-eight years. You sold me my land and several times when I was in a tight you could have ruined me. You did not do it and took care of me and now I am well fixed." Hobart's economic philosophy in operation provided for a democratic economic system of free enterprise for the common man which would evolve out of larger corporate wealth.

The span of life of Timothy Dwight Hobart from 1855 to 1935 was one of the most momentous periods in the history of the world. It was a period in which the industrial revolution reached its first stage of perfection; a period of rapid and revolutionary changes which extended throughout the world. It was during this period that the last land frontiers in America were occupied and the last chapters were written in the technique of pioneering which had been used since the seventeenth century. The rapid changes and developments which took place in Texas and the Southwest during this period were but reverberations, out on the fringes of the older and more settled regions, of far-reaching changes that were finally to produce two world wars.

The final consequences of these two wars are yet to be determined. But one of the most significant trends of the present struggle is the desperate groping of the peoples of the world in their efforts to establish a world order founded on the basic principles which have evolved out of the American system, and which have been so well preserved on the American frontiers. Hobart and his contemporaries grafted the last fruits of the old American system into the soil of Texas and the Southwest, and their fighting men went out to all parts of the globe and demonstrated what individual initiative and resourcefulness, characteristic of the American frontier, can do. This is part of the

heritage Hobart and his generation have bequeathed to their posterity.

The life of Timothy Dwight Hobart, filled with activity and achievement, embodied and exemplified many of the highest qualities and ideals of his generation. These qualities were fairly well summed up in the following words by the Reverend C. E. Lancaster who gave Hobart's funeral oration: "His clear intelligence was resistant to hasty conclusions; once reached, they were dispassionate and final. He was fitted by native character and habits of life for great administrative work. He was vigilant, patient, cordial, and an intuitive judge of men. He was never swayed by trends of public opinion, though responsive to them, which fitted him for so tremendous a place of responsibility as he always carried. His vigorous intellect, lofty principles, honest feeling of heart, brought him into the councils of our nation's responsible men in government, education, religion, and economic life. He was Pampa's first citizen."

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None of the above letters and documents are listed in the bibliography. I have also omitted from the bibliography a number of bulletins and documents that are in the Archives of the Panhandle-Plains Museum at Canyon, Texas.

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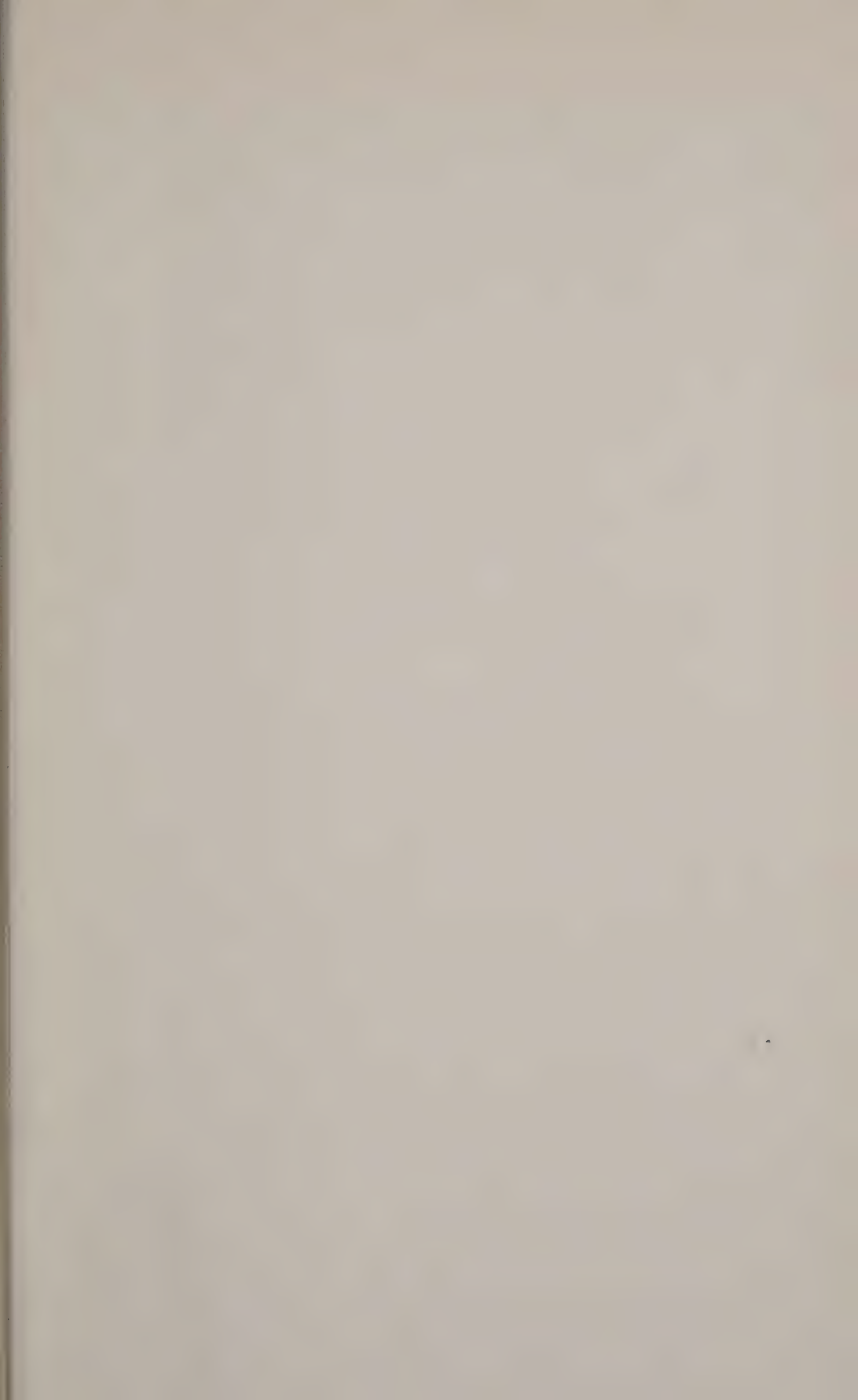
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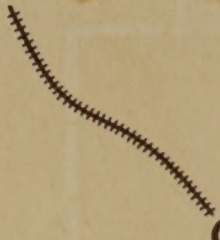
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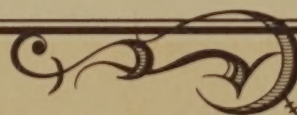
OKLAHOMA

TEXAS

Rock Island R.R.



Map Showing
The White Deer Lands
and the
J. A. Ranch in the Texas Panhandle
and the Section of Texas known as
West Texas



Tascosa

Amarillo

Rock Island R.R.

Santa Fe R.R.

NEW
MEXICO

WEST
TEXAS

PECOS R.

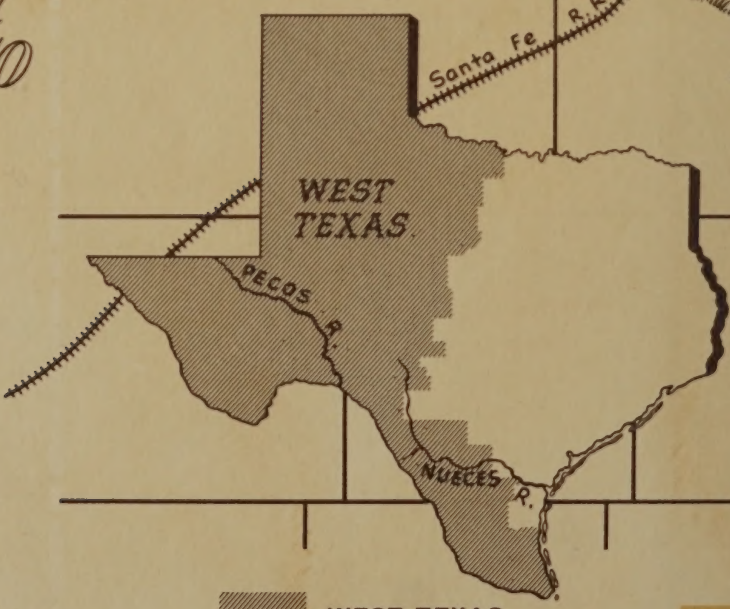
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WEST TEXAS

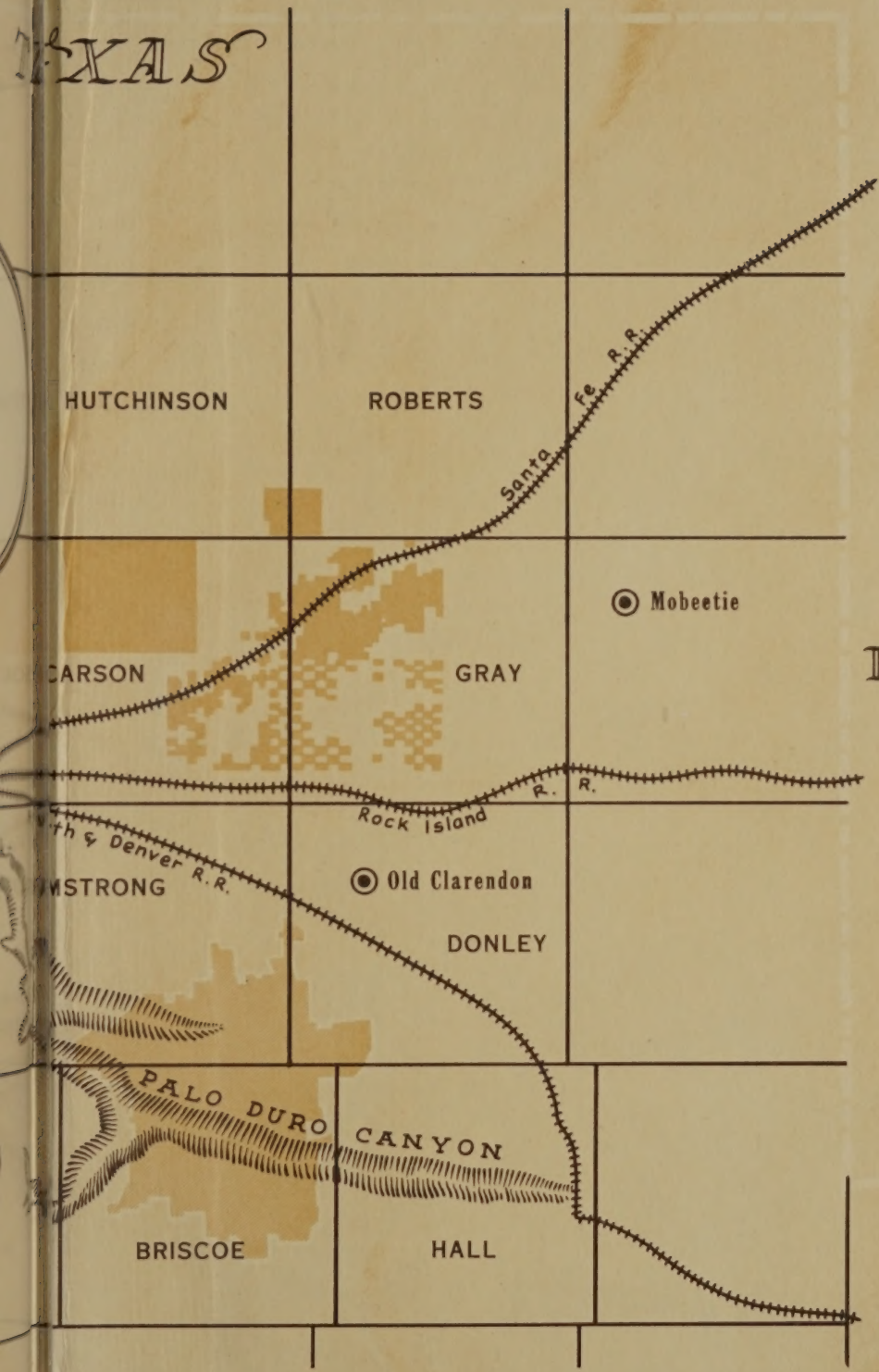


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DEER LANDS

J. A. RANCH, 1927

